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THE YAKUTS

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The Yakuts are the basic population of the Yakut ASSR, territorially 101 one of the largest Republics in the Soviet Union. The name of this people was taken by the Russians from the Tungus, who called them Jeko. The Yakuts call themselves Sakha, and in the ancient legends they are known as Urangkhay Sakha.

General Information

By language, the Yakuts belong to the Turkic-speaking group of peoples (the northeastern branch), although the language occupies a somewhat isolated position in this group. In the vocabulary and, to some extent, in the grammar of the Yakut language, there are many Mongol elements as well as others of Tungus and of unknown origin.

The total number of Yakuts according to the 1926 census was 235,926 161 persons, including 122,245 men and 113,681 women. The urban population was 4936 persons and the rural population 230,990. 162 There were 235,523 persons speaking their own (Yakut) language. Statistics for the same year tell us that the Yakuts made up 82.3% of the total population of the Republic, the remainder being 10.4% Russians, 4% Evenks and Lamuts, 0.5% Chukchi and 0.14% Yukagirs.

The principal territory occupied by the Yakuts is the basin of the Mid- 101 dle Lena with the Lower Aldan and Vilyuy. There are also Yakuts living close to the mouth of the Olekma River along the rivers Yana, Indigirka, Kolyma, Olenek and Anabar. Almost the whole of this region is located in 13 the East Siberian taiga belt, which consists partly of mountains and partly of lowlands (the Vilyuy depression). In the Far North, along the Arctic coast, there stretches a wide belt of forestless tundra, 300 km long. The general landscape is a gentle slope from south to north, intersected in different directions by mountain ranges (Verkhoyansk, Cherskiy and so on). The territory is rich in mineral deposits (coal, iron, diamonds, gold, silver, lead ore, platinum, salt, semiprecious stones and so on), but before the Revolution was hardly touched at all. Apart from an extensive network of rivers, Yakutiya has a large number of small lakes. Many of them have been drying up in recent years. The banks of the lakes and rivers as well as the numerous meadows (alaas'y) within the taiga, constitute the cultural oases. The climate is a dry one, severely continental, with fierce frosts throughout the long winter (the cold pole occurs in the upper reaches of the Indigirka, near the village of Oymyakon) with a brief, though hot summer (except for the Far North and the mountainous regions). The soils are saline and fairly fertile. There is a layer of permafrost at a depth of one or two meters, but it does not prevent plant life. The taiga flora consists predominantly of larch, as well as some birch and pine. The animal world is rich and varied, containing squirrel, Siberian ferret, ermine, hare, fox, bear, wolverine, elk, blue fox, wild reindeer, musk deer, etc.; the species of birds are numerous and in the lakes and rivers there is an abundance of carp, different types of salmon, sturgeon, and so on. 13

The distribution of Yakuts throughout the territory of the Republic is extremely uneven. About nine-tenths of them are concentrated in the central regions—in the former Yakutskiy and Vilyuyskiy Okrugs. These are the two principal groups of Yakuts, the first being slightly larger in number than the second. The "Yakutiyan" (or Amga-Lena) Yakuts occupy a rectangle between the Lena, Lower Aldan and Amga, the taiga plateau, and also the adjoining left bank of the Lena. The "Vilyuy" Yakuts occupy the Vilyuy Basin. It is among these basic Yakut regions that the most typical, purely Yakut way of life has developed; it is here that it has been studied most thoroughly, particularly on the Amga-Lena plateau. The third, considerably smaller group of Yakuts is to be found in the region of Olekminsk. The Yakuts of this group are more Russified, and their way of life (though not their language) has become closer to the Russian. And, finally the last group, the smallest but most widely spread, is the population of the northern regions of Yakutiya, the basins of the Kolyma, Indigirka, Yana, Olenek and Anabar Rivers. 162 101

The northern Yakuts are distinguished by a completely original cultural way of life: in this respect they are closer to the smaller hunting-fishing peoples of the North, the Tungus and Yukagirs, than their southern fellow tribesmen. These northern Yakuts are, even, here and there, known as Tungus (for example, on the upper reaches of the Olenek and Anabar), although in language they are Yakuts and call themselves Sakha.

In language the Yakuts are monolithic. There are no dialects, there are only slight regional differences; for example, in the southern part, the Amga-Lena plateau, there is akan'ye [pronunciation of an unstressed "o" as "a"] and in the north and on the Vilyuy there is okan'ye [pronunciation of the unstressed "o" as "o"].

The earliest history of the Yakut district has become known only during the last few years through archeological research, chiefly through the efforts of A. P. Okladnikov. Paleolithic campsites have been found on the Upper and Middle Lena. During the Neolithic man already inhabited the entire course of the Lena, probably together with its tributaries and other Yakutiyan rivers. The neolithic tribes led the seminomadic life of hunters and fishermen. Even then there were signs of economic and cultural ties between the population of the Lena district and the more southern, easterly and western regions of Siberia. These ties became stronger during the Bronze Age. It was even recently widely believed in science that the population of Yakutiya was itself never able to work bronze, and that it obtained bronze objects from the Baykal regions and the Upper Yenisey. It has now been proved (by Okladnikov) that bronze was worked in Yakutiya itself, and, moreover, that the population carried on lively exchange with the tribes of southern Siberia, from whom they first learned about bronze. 172

Were these ancient tribes of the Lena district the ancestors of the present-day Yakuts? The problem of the origin of the Yakut people is one of the most complicated ones in the history of the Siberian peoples. It has a long history of its own, in fact. But until recently the solution was sought in an entirely different way; it was assumed that in origin the Yakuts were 174

completely unconnected with the ancient inhabitants of the Lena district/ 174
and that they constituted an element which migrated there.

Back in the 17th-18th centuries, the view was expressed in literature [114]
(by Isbrand Ides, Stralenberg, Miller, Gmelin, Fischer and others) that the Yakuts were a people who had come from the south, specifically from the Baykal region. This view, which was later developed and substantiated (particularly at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries) by ethnographers, became the traditional theory of the "southern origin of the Yakuts," a theory which even today is predominant.

This theory is based, first, on the existence among the Yakuts themselves of legends relating that their ancestors once lived in the Baykal region and were driven away by the Buryats, and, second, on the undoubted evidence of cultural ties between the Yakuts and the nomadic steppe to the south; this evidence is, first and foremost, the Turkic origin of the Yakut language, and the pastoral economy of the Yakuts, together with a number of related elements of material culture (leather utensils, the preparation of kumys, butter, riding and pack saddles and so on), certain aspects of dress, and so on. All these phenomena of the language and culture of the Yakuts single them out clearly from the surrounding taiga peoples and bring them closer to the distant Turkic-speaking (to some extent Mongolic-speaking) population of southern Siberia and Central Asia. On the basis of these facts, the traditional theory considers the Yakuts to be an immigrant people who once lived in the Baykal region (according to some investigators they lived still earlier on the Upper Yenisey, in the Uryankhay district and even in Turkestan). It was later—in the 13th and 14th centuries, according to the prevalent opinion, though asserted by some to be much earlier—that the Yakuts were driven from there to the north, and to the Middle Lena, where they settled down, displacing the earlier settlers, the Tungus, from those parts. The Tungus, incidentally, were partly assimilated by the Yakuts, who borrowed certain elements of taiga culture from them (hunting, etc.).

This conception of the origin of the Yakuts undoubtedly contains a grain of truth, since it is based on obvious facts; but it is clearly one-sided and oversimplifies the problem. The advocates of this theory underrate the complexity and originality of Yakut culture; in explaining the origin of some aspects of it which indeed link it with the nomadic steppes, this theory at the same time ignores other, equally important and abundant cultural evidence linking the Yakuts with their neighbors, the hunting peoples of the taiga. On the other hand, the actual penetration of pastoral-nomadic cultural elements into the Middle Lena (which is an undisputed historical fact) cannot be depicted, as used to be the case, in the form of the extremely unlikely simultaneous mass migration of an entire people 2500 miles through dense, practically uninhabited taiga into unfamiliar lands of the north.

Contemporary Soviet scholars (Okladnikov and Tokarev) do not deny/ 174
the presence of southern elements in the makeup of the Yakut population 114
and culture, but they attempt to find another explanation for them. First of all, it was only recently that due attention was given to the complexity and heterogeneity of Yakut culture. Anthropological data (those of M. G. Levin) show that there are at least two racial components in the Yakut population, one of which (the predominant one) is very close in type to the western Buryat, while the other is most likely related to the ancient population of the Siberian taiga. Ethnographic data show the existence of certain autochthonous taiga hunting elements in the Yakut culture, alongside the southern, pastoral elements. With regard to the Yakut language,

most of the vocabulary and the grammatical structure are undoubtedly 174
Turkic in origin. At the same time, the language contains a consider- 114
able number of loan words from the Mongol and Tungus languages.
Academician V. V. Radlov (1908) put forward the hypothesis that the
vocabulary, phonetic structure, and even the grammatical structure of
the Yakut language has a pre-Turkic, more ancient stratum of partly
Mongol and partly indeterminate origin.

The latest research, admittedly, has not confirmed this hypothesis; 174
hence the problem of non-Turkic elements in the Yakut language requires further study. Analysis of the names of the Yakut tribal-clan groups (known from 17th-century documents and also from later data) confirms that the Yakut population is further made up of immigrant groups from the south. To judge by the names, these include the present-day Batulins, Khorins, Tumats, Ergits, and some other clans and naslegs[1]. It may be considered that pastoral groups, taking their nomadic culture with them, gradually infiltrated the Middle Lena Basin from the south, from the Baykal regions. One of the principal groups of these migrants from the south was evidently the Kurykans—a Turkic people inhabiting the western Baykal region in the 9th and 10th centuries. Since some of the Kurykans clearly contributed to the composition of the western Buryats later on, this explains many features of similarity in the culture of the western Buryats and Yakuts and the wide distribution of the same anthropological type among both of them.

The trek northwards was gradual and took a long time. In the Amga-Lena watershed, under conditions favorable for pastoralism, these newly arrived groups settled down, establishing contact with the local hunting-fishing population. In the process of economic and cultural contact, there was gradual absorption of the local population by the newcomers. A higher, pastoral type of economy and southern elements of culture, as well as the Turkic language, became predominant.

Such is the ethnogenesis of the Yakuts in the light of present-day knowledge.

Precise historical accounts of the Yakuts only date from the time of 175
their first contact with the Russians, that is to say, 1620, and annexation
to the Russian State. At that time the Yakuts were not a single political 648
unit, but were divided into a number of independent tribes. Tribal rela-
tions were already decomposing, however, and there was a fairly clearly 619
marked class stratification. The tsarist voyevods and soldiery took ad- 585
vantage of the intertribal strife to break the resistance of some of the Yakut population; they also took advantage of the class differences within it by pursuing a policy of systematic support of the ruling aristocratic clique, the princelings (toyons), whom they turned into their own agents for purposes of governing the Yakut district. From that moment on, the class differences among the Yakuts began to become more clearly marked.

The Yakut masses led a hard life. They paid tribute in sable and 175
fox furs, had to perform a number of other compulsory services and were
exploited by the tsarist soldiery, Russian merchants and their own toyons. 648
After several unsuccesful uprisings (1634, 1636-1637, 1639-1640, and 651
1642), and after the toyons had gone over to the side of the voyevods, 669
the Yakut masses could only retaliate against the oppression by sporadic attempts at resistance and flight from their native ulusy to outlying parts.

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[1] A territorial and population unit; originally, the members of a single camp, now equivalent to the rayon.—Ed.

parts. By the end of the 18th century, the fur resources of the Yakut 175
district were running out and the district itself had been partially devastated
through the piratical rule of the tsarist authorities. At the same 648
time, the Yakut population, which had migrated from the Lena-Vilyuy 651
district for various reasons, appeared on the borderland of Yakutiya, where [167]
they had not been seen before—on the Kolyma, Indigirka, Olenek and Anabar
right up to the Lower Tunguska Basin.

But even during those first few decades contact with the Russian 175
people favorably influenced the economics and culture of the Yakuts. 648
The Russians brought a higher culture with them; agriculture was already 241
in evidence on the Lena by the middle of the 17th century; the
Russian type of dwelling, Russian fabric clothes, new trades, new furnishings 342
and domestic objects slowly began to find their way among the 291
Yakut population.

It is an extremely important fact that the establishment of Russian 648
authority in Yakutiya put a stop to the intertribal warring and looting by 721
the toyons, which up to that time had been a great hardship for the Yakut 175
population.

An end was also put to the arbitrary behavior of the Russian soldiers, who often fell out among themselves and tried to draw the Yakuts into their quarrels. The order established in 1640 in the Yakut country was better than the previous state of chronic anarchy and constant internecine strife.

In the 18th century, by dint of the further penetration by the Russians 175
to the east (the annexation of Kamchatka, the Chukchi peninsula, the
Aleutian Islands and Alaska), Yakutiya played the part of a transit camp 648
for new campaigns and the acquisition of more distant lands.

Between 1720 and 1740, the expeditions of Bering increased the importance of the Yakutsk-Okhotsk highway, which was used to transport a great deal of freight (this highway retained its importance up to the middle of the 19th century). All this drew Yakutiya into Russia's system of economic ties and thereby raised the general level of the productive forces of that territory.

The influx of Russian peasants (particularly along the Lena Valley 175
on account of the construction of the mail route in 1773) created the 241
right conditions for mutual influence between Russian and Yakut cultural
elements. By the end of the 17th and 18th centuries, agriculture 648
began to be practiced by the Yakuts, though at first it was a very slow 342
business and Russian-type houses began to appear. Nevertheless, even
in the 19th century the number of Russian settlers was comparatively
small.

In addition to peasant colonization, of great importance in the 19th 175
century was the system of convict settlements in Yakutiya. Together
with the criminal convicts, whose effect on the Yakuts was negative, 648
political exiles began to appear in Yakutiya in the second half of the 19th
century; these were first the Narodniks[2], and later, in the 1890's, the
Marxists, and they played a large part in the cultural and political
development of the Yakut masses.

By the beginning of the 20th century, great strides had been made in the economic development of Yakutiya, at least in the central regions

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[2] Literally, "Populists;" adherents of a political movement directed toward a radical reconstruction of the social order through the peasantry.—Ed.

(Yakutskiy, Vilyuyskiy, and Olekminskiy Okrugs). An internal market was established and the development of economic ties speeded up the growth of national self-awareness. 175 648

Despite the cruel exploitation of the poorer Yakuts by the tsarist authorities and their own bourgeois-toyon hierarchy, the class struggle in Yakutiya up to 1890 was restricted to covert forms. But from this time the struggle of the ulus poor for land, possessed by the toyons, grew more and more intense. The growing discontent, however, was to some extent utilized by the toyons themselves, who were able by skillful maneuvering to direct the discontent away from themselves and toward the tsarist officialdom during the 1905-1906 revolution. In 1906 the toyons set up the Yakut Union—a bourgeois-nationalist organization, which did not last very long.

During the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917, the movement of the Yakut masses for liberation developed more deeply and widely. At first it was led predominantly by Bolsheviks (particularly in Yakutsk), but after the return of most of the political exiles to Russia (in May 1917), the counterrevolutionary groups of the toyons, who had joined forces with the Social-revolutionary-bourgeois section of the urban population, gained the upper hand.

The struggle for Soviet power in Yakutiya dragged on for a long time. It was only on June 30, 1918, that the Soviet regime was officially proclaimed for the first time in Yakutsk, and only in December 1919, after the liquidation of the Kolchak forces all over Siberia, that the Soviet regime was finally established in Yakutiya.

Pastoralism

Pastoralism has been the principal branch of Yakut economy for centuries, clearly distinguishing the Yakuts from the surrounding peoples. In Russian documents of the 17th century the Yakuts are sometimes called "the horse people." But both at that time and later, apart from horse-breeding, the principal form of Yakut economy was the breeding of cattle. These were distributed more evenly among the different classes of the population than horses, which were concentrated in the hands of the toyons. 231

During the 19th century, horse-breeding in Yakutiya gradually declined. At the end of the century, there were only 115,000-130,000 horses and 220,000-260,000 head of cattle. Apart from these types of livestock, the Yakuts also had dogs (both hunting dogs and watchdogs) and cats as domestic animals. In the northern regions, the Yakuts herded reindeer, like the Evenks. Other types of domestic animals such as sheep, goats, pigs, and also poultry were unknown before the arrival of the Russians, and were hardly to be found at all on Yakut farms right up to the Revolution.

With regard to methods of keeping cattle, the Yakuts had long practiced two basic systems—pasturing and stabling. The horses were left to graze both in the summer and (usually) in the winter; by no means was fodder always stored away for them and on many farms the horses had to dig it up with their hooves from under the snow throughout the winter. The Yakuts stored up hay as winter fodder for foals and cattle.

The Yakuts were familiar with mowing before the arrival of the Russians (the current opinion that the technique of mowing was acquired from the Russians is wrong), although it was evidently conducted on a smaller scale. Legend states that in ancient times bone scythes were used for mowing. But the Yakut scythe, which was retained until recently 412

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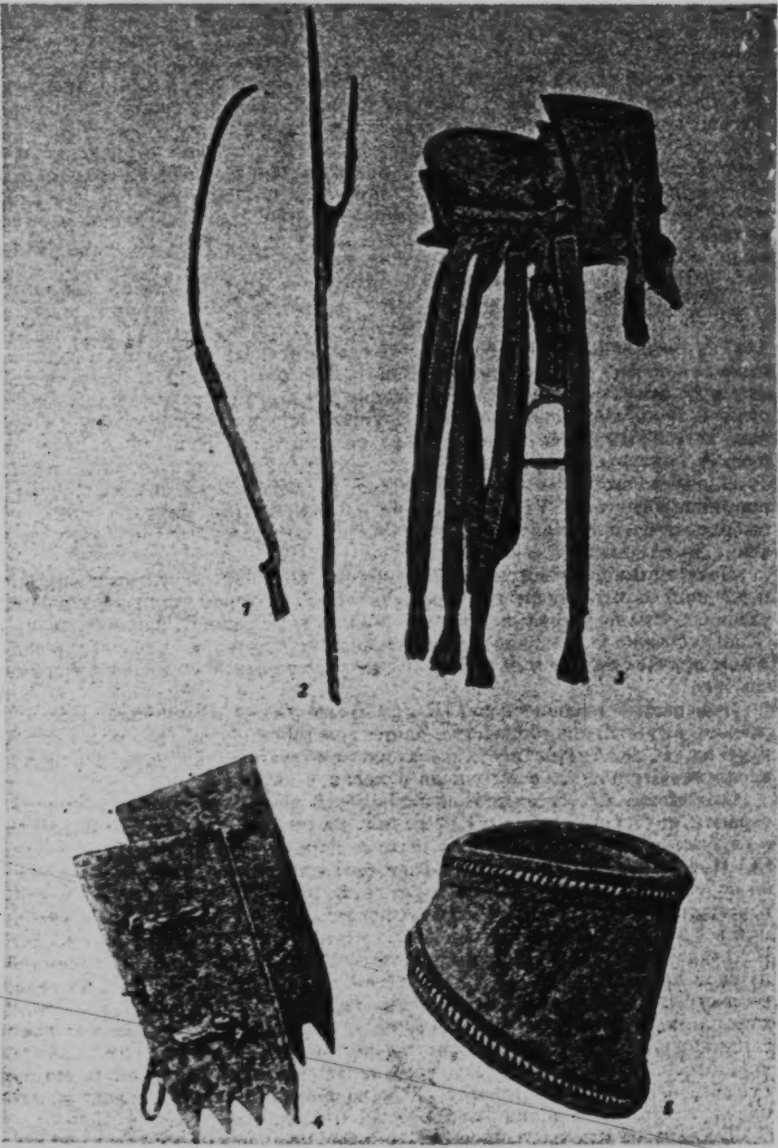

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Farming implements: 1—old-type hump-backed scythe; 2—wooden hay fork; 3—old-type saddle with metal inlay; 4—muzzle for calves made with boards with teeth; 5—birchbark muzzle for calves.

(up to the beginning of the 20th century), is a humped iron scythe with a 412
short, curved handle with which the grass was rather hewn (left and right)
than mown. Later on this scythe was replaced by the Russian Lithuanian-type [177]
scythe and is never used nowadays. The Yakuts mowed the grass in
the alasy and river valleys, gathering the hay into small sheaves, in
which it often became soaked and rotted away, hence the quality of the hay
was not usually very high.

In the winter, the cattle were kept in cold, dark and crowded khotons, 343
which were usually built under the same roof as the dwelling; the animals
were usually herded into the khoton only at night, while in the daytime they 231
were left outside, in the frost. When there was a lack of hay, the cattle
had little to eat, and were watered with icy water from a hole in the ice.
The austere conditions under which the cattle were kept and the cold climate 234
made them hardy, but unproductive. The Yakut cow yielded an average
of 60 buckets of milk a year, and for two or three months in the
winter was left unmilked. The mares were only milked in the summer,
as a general rule.

Both the cattle and the horses were utilized in much the same way; 234
they gave milk, meat, and hides, and served for transportation (oxen were
usually harnessed to carts, while horses were ridden, or carried packs). 231

The predominance of pastoralism involved preservation of the semi-nomadic
way of life. Until recently the Yakuts retained the custom of 361
moving twice a year—round about May and October—from the winter to
the summer camps, and back again. The winter dwellings were usually
set up near the mowings, while the summer dwellings (which, incidentally,
were comparatively close by the former) were built close to the pasturelands.

Fishing, Hunting and Agriculture

The second branch of economy in importance was fishing. There was 226
a tremendous amount of carp and a small fish called mundu in the abundant
lakes, and coregonus muksun, white salmon and so on were plentiful
in the rivers. For the poor people who had no cattle, fishing had long been [184]
a main occupation; the expression balyksyt (fisherman) is used in documents
of the 17th century in the sense of "a poor man." At the same time,
there were actually complete tribal groups who seem to have lived
chiefly by fishing. These were the so-called "foot clans" of the Yakuts
(Osekui, Ontuls, Kokui, Kiriks, Kyrgydays and Orgots). These tribes,
who were clearly a remnant of the very ancient prepastoral population,
were first discovered in the 17th century by Russians on the Vilyuy.
For the Yakut pastoralists, fishing was an essential subsidiary occupation
and has retained its importance until our own day.

The fish were caught chiefly in the summer, but there was also fishing through the ice during the wintertime. Use was made of seines which were chiefly made of horsehair, smaller nets, and sack-nets, etc. In the autumn there was usually collective fishing with a large seine, and the catch was divided among all those taking part, in accordance with ancient custom.

There is a hypothesis (V. L. Seroshevskiy) that Yakut fishing was only 114
recently borrowed from the Evenks and Russians. In actual fact, fishing
is the oldest form of economy among the population of the Lena region, 226
including the ancestors of the Yakuts.

Hunting is the third, though far less important, branch of Yakut economy. 224
Just like fishing, it goes back to very ancient times. During the

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964

RV2 Yakut RV2

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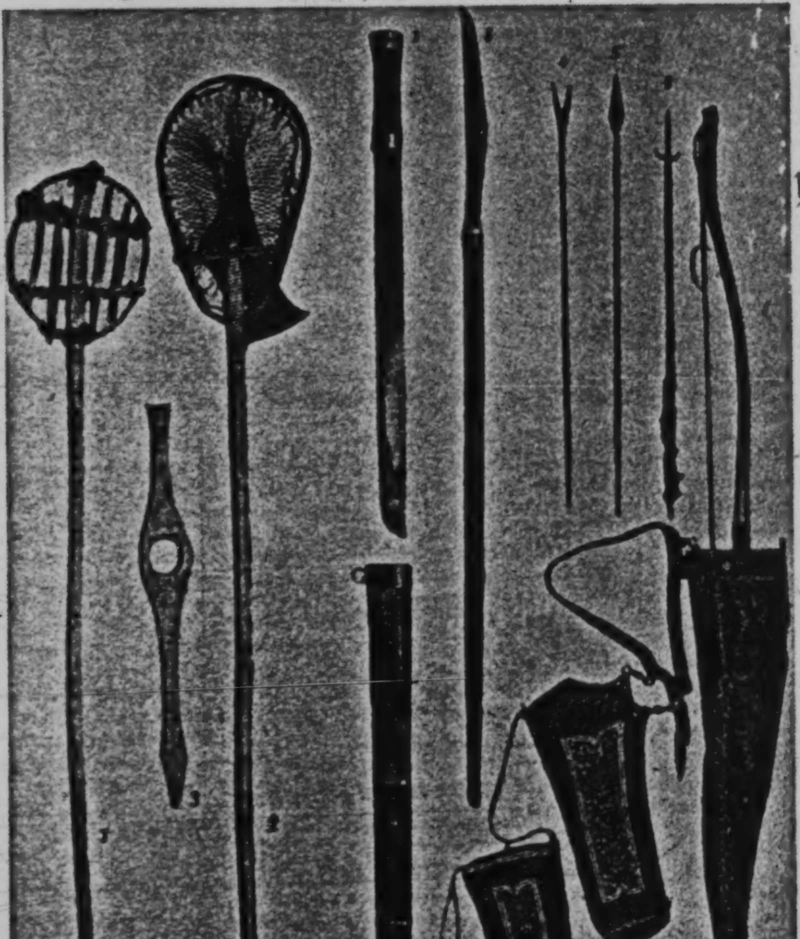

A. Fishing implements: 1—scoop for removing ice from hole; 2—horse-hair net for catching lake fish; 3—stick with hole through which net is lowered through hole in ice.

B. Old-type weapons of 18th century. 1—sword; 2—sheath for sword; 3—pike; 4—arrow with iron forked tip; 5—arrow with spear-shape tip; 6—arrow with iron three-forked tip; 7—belt with quiver; holder for bow and arrows.

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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Processing grain: 1—removing ears from sheaf with butt of axe; 2—grinding in quern.

224 stage of initial contact between the Russians and Yakuts (17th century) the latter hunted both for meat and fur, but both forms took second place in relation to pastoralism. As time went on, and the fur resources of the region became depleted, the proportion of hunting decreased more and more. By the beginning of the 20th century, squirrel, fox, hare, Siberian ferret, ermine and bear, elk and other animals were hunted in winter for their fur in the central regions of Yakutiya, and there was also hunting of

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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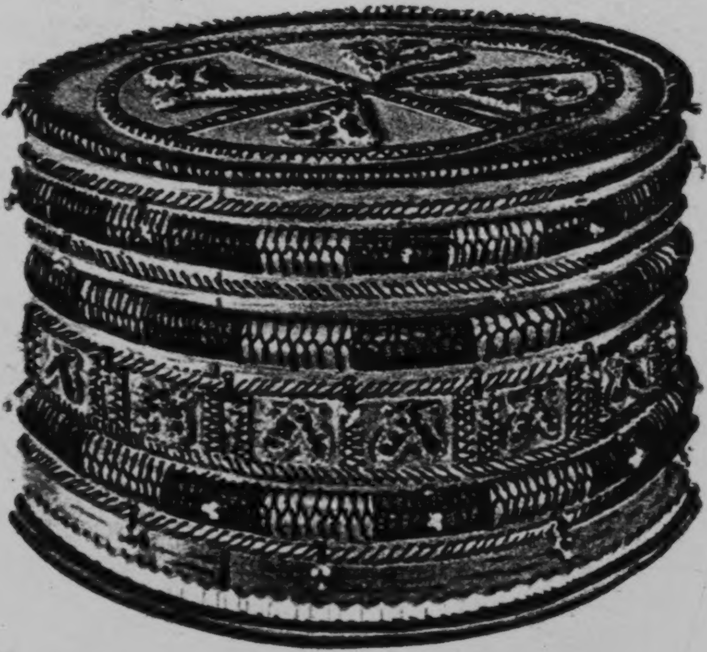

Birchbark box. Embroidered with beads and horsehair.

224 aquatic and forest birds-duck, partridge, hazel-grouse, and so on. In the northern regions, the Yakuts engaged, and still engage far more in hunting; for the Yakuts from these regions, just as for the Evenks, Evens, and Yukagirs, hunting is at times the chief means of subsistence. There, they chiefly hunt blue fox, hare, wild reindeer, elk, wild duck and geese, and so on.

The hunting techniques of the Yakuts hardly differed from those of other hunting peoples in Siberia. Instead of bows and arrows, guns (usually the flint type) came into use all over during the 19th century, and were used for squirrels, birds and other game; dogs were also used. A variety of traps and hunting equipment including blue-fox snares, bear-traps, hair nooses for hares and birds, and so on.

A purely Yakut method of hunting, unknown to any other people, is one in which an ox is used; the hunter skillfully approaches the game, hiding behind the ox, which he drives in front of him, then making the ox lie down, fires at the target from behind it. This method of hunting can be regarded as a modification of the well-known Tungus technique using a decoy reindeer as the bait; the modification is due to the transition from reindeer-breeding to pastoralism.

The Yakuts also had another method of hunting, unknown to the population of the taiga, which was a tradition among the steppe nomads; this consisted in driving the game on horseback, sometimes with dogs.

222 Gathering also played an important part as a subsidiary occupation, particularly among the poorer people. Pine sapwood (the inside layer of the bark) was usually gathered by women in the early spring and stored up for the winter in large quantities and in the dried form (from 10 to 100 poods per family, according to some sources).

In the northern regions where pines do not grow, they gathered larch sapwood, although it was not valued to the same degree, and various edible roots (lily, chekana) and green vegetables (wild onion, horseradish, sorrel, etc.).

Of far less importance in the economy of the Yakuts was berrying (blueberries, bog blueberries and so on).

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648 The Yakuts only became familiar with soil cultivation fairly recently. At the time of the arrival of the Russians, agriculture was not to be found at all in Yakutiya, and even later it was only a few Russian settlers who engaged in it. Although in certain cases the Yakuts had been sowing crops since the end of the 17th century, it was only about the middle of the 19th century that agriculture became widespread in the Yakut economy, and this was chiefly due to the influence of the Russian peasants (particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug).

The overall development of commodity relationships helped to speed up the development of agriculture and here and there ploughing was enforced by the administration.

At the end of the 19th century, the political exiles and the exiled Skoptsy helped to spread agriculture among the Yakuts.

Nevertheless, right up to the Revolution there was comparatively little farming among the Yakut population. They sowed some barley and less wheat. The tilling techniques were always very primitive.

Crafts and Trades

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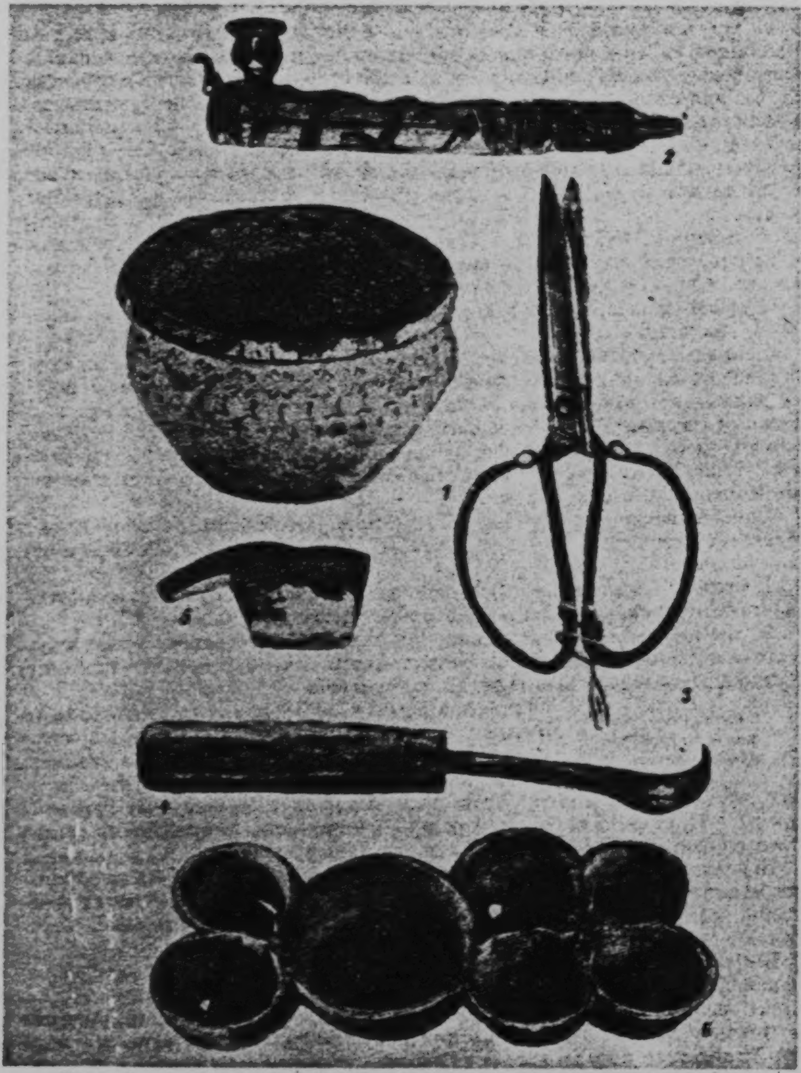
[53] The processing of raw materials and the making of different objects among the Yakuts chiefly retained the nature of domestic production for personal needs and not commerce. Woodworking and the making of



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Utensils: 1—clay pots; 2—pipe; 3—scissors; 4—curved knife for making wooden vessels; 5—wooden pipe; 6—wooden holder for teacups.

articles from birchbark take first place. The tools used for woodworking,—the axe, knife, drill, and so on—were improved and made more intricate under the influence of the Russians. 322

Wooden and birchbark utensils, crockery, furnishings and various other small objects were of great variety and were artistically and

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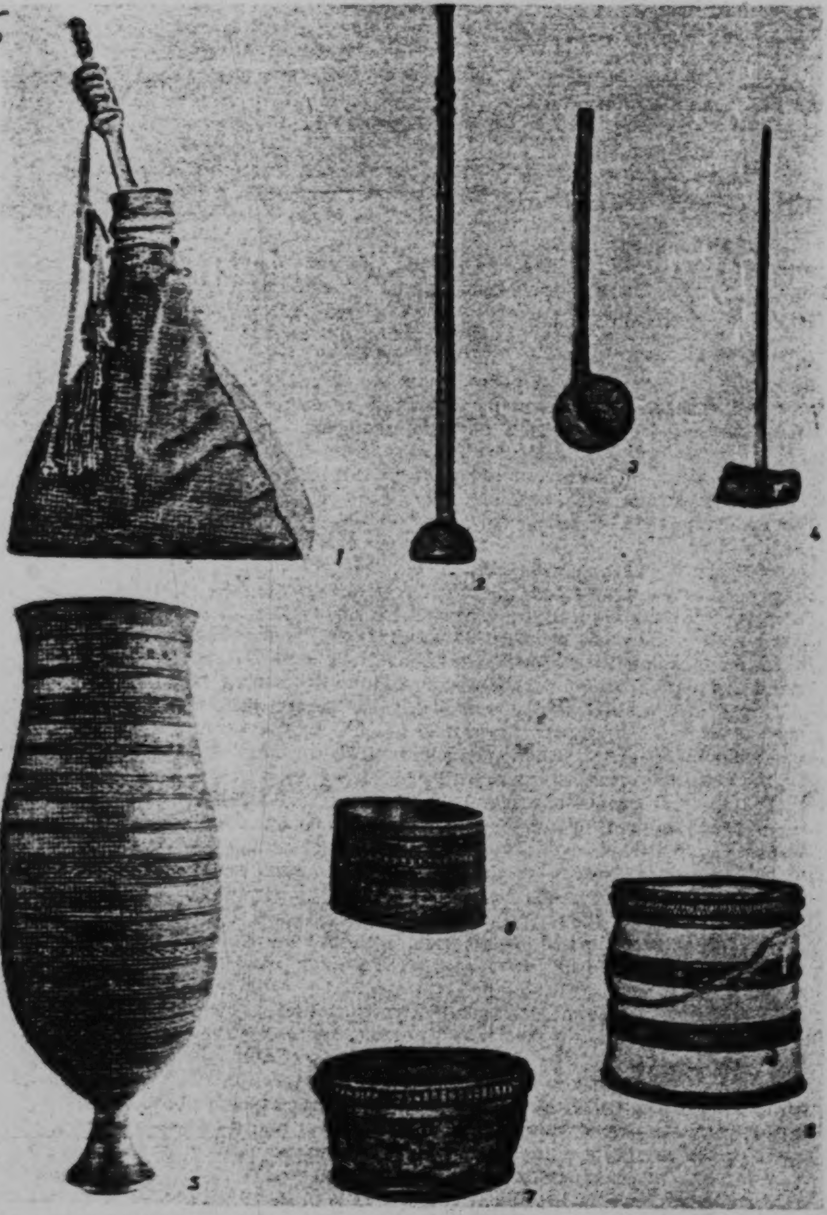

Utensils: 1—leather bag for kumys; 2—wooden churn-staff for beating kumys; 3—wooden ladle for pouring kumys; 4—churn-staff made of cow's horn for churning butter; 5—carved wooden vessel for kumys; 6—wooden dish for kumys; 7—birchbark vessel for milk; 8—birchbark pail.

skillfully made; the wooden crockery was usually decorated with carving, 322
while the birchbark objects were decorated with horsehair designs.

Fur-dressing and tanning were very common. The materials were made 281
into a great variety of different things—clothing, footwear, and headgear;
carpets, underlays (usually made of horse- or cow-hide, often sewn to-
gether from pieces into a checkered mosaic), blankets (from horse-
skin); the leather vessels were made in a variety of sizes, ranging from
the enormous simiir' for kumys down to the tiny pail or tursuk; various
parts of saddles, straps, nooses and so on. The actual working of the
leather and fur was very primitive—the hide was smoked (in ancient
times and even in the 17th century this was done in earth stoves), crumpled,
smeared with oil or cream, and there was no true tanning. The manufacture
of reindeer suede was evidently learnt from the Evenks and the Evens.
The Yakuts themselves did not make any cloth, either from animal wool or 286
vegetable fiber—and only used what was imported. They did not know
about spinning, nor how to roll felt. On the other hand, horsehair was 283
widely employed; it was used for the ornamentation of birchbark and other 439
objects, particularly for braiding different kinds of lassoes, cord, laces
and nets, loops, fans to keep flies away, stuffing pillows for saddles and 531
so on. The Yakuts also wove horsehair for decorative purposes. The
individual hairs were twisted into a thread by hand on a bare knee, with-
out using a spindle.

Blacksmithery was the only trade among the Yakuts which had long 326
acquired commercial importance, although normally it was not a separate
trade from agriculture. In the 17th century the Russians found it to be
highly developed among the Yakuts. The iron was obtained from marsh [316]
ore, of which there was a great deal, particularly on the Vilyuy. The ore
was mined along the rivers Botoma, Amga, Sola and others. It was first
smelted in primitive blast furnaces. But at the beginning of the 20th century
the Yakut smiths were already working with imported iron. They forged
it into a variety of implements and utensils, weapons and so on. Apart
from iron, the Yakut smiths worked low-grade silver, which in the 19th
and 20th centuries was partly obtainable by melting down Russian coins.
This silver was made into various ornaments, linings for belts, whips,
horse harnessing. The equipment used in the smithies was fairly unso-
phisticated—furnaces worked with bellows (portable), anvils, hammer and
tongs.

The fact that they engaged in ceramics singles out the Yakuts from the 323
people around them. They evidently retained pottery as a relic of the
Neolithic stage. Nevertheless, it was very primitive. To the dark, viscous
clay they used to add powder ground from old fired pots and then mold the
clay mixture diluted with water into the walls of the pot with their hands
(without a wheel), using a stone to smooth them out (on the inside) and a
trowel (on the outside). The pots were fired in the hearth. The pottery
varied in size and the shapes and designs were crude. In the last few
decades, Yakut ceramics have been replaced by Russian ones.

Mammoth-ivory carving (Yakutiya is rich in mammoth skeletons), 321
which was probably not begun before the 19th century, was not a common
trade, although it was an interesting one. The ivory was carved into a
variety of trinkets and small boxes.

These were the main types of production among the Yakuts prior to 433
the Revolution. As a whole, the Yakut economy remained at a fairly low
level of development, and by and large remained a subsistence economy.
Nevertheless, the sale of homemade products acquired ever-greater 443
importance towards the end of the 19th century. This was mainly the case

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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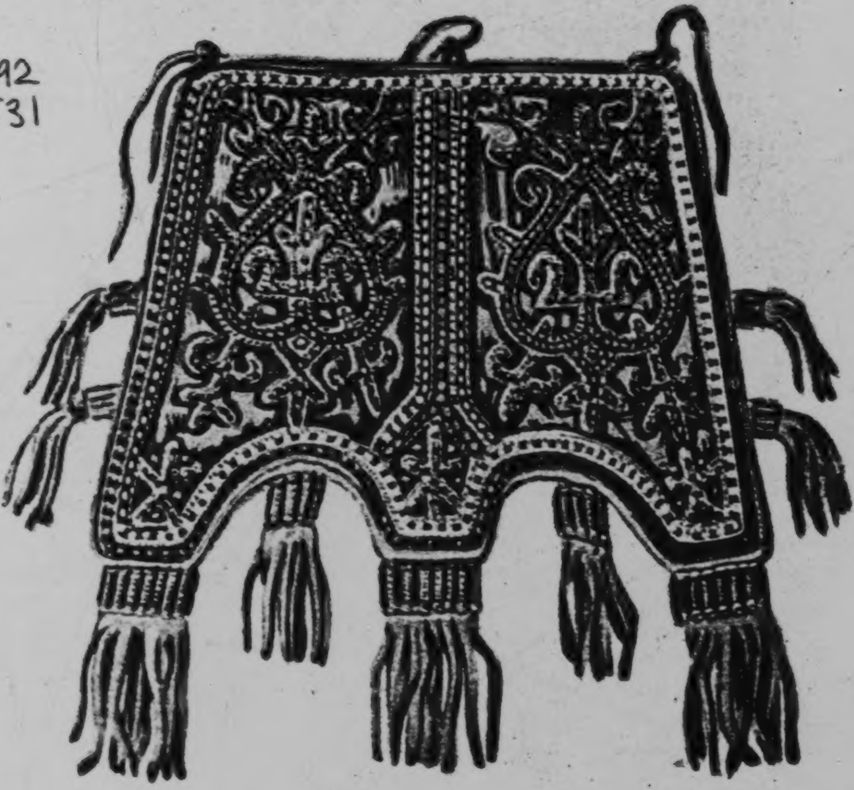


Saddle-blanket decorated with colored beads and metal plates.

with the toyons, particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug, close to the uluay associated with the Lena gold mines and those lying near the town of Yakutsk. The toyons sold butter, meat, hay and other agricultural products at these markets. 443

Commercial relations then began to develop within the actual Yakut ulusy. Forged objects had long been manufactured for purposes of sale, and there were cases in which wooden, bone and other articles were made to order. Products from cattle-breeding, hay, firewood and building materials were also often sold and bought; the products of hunting—furs—were almost universally sold. Nevertheless, the overall structure of the Yakut economy was still a subsistence one.

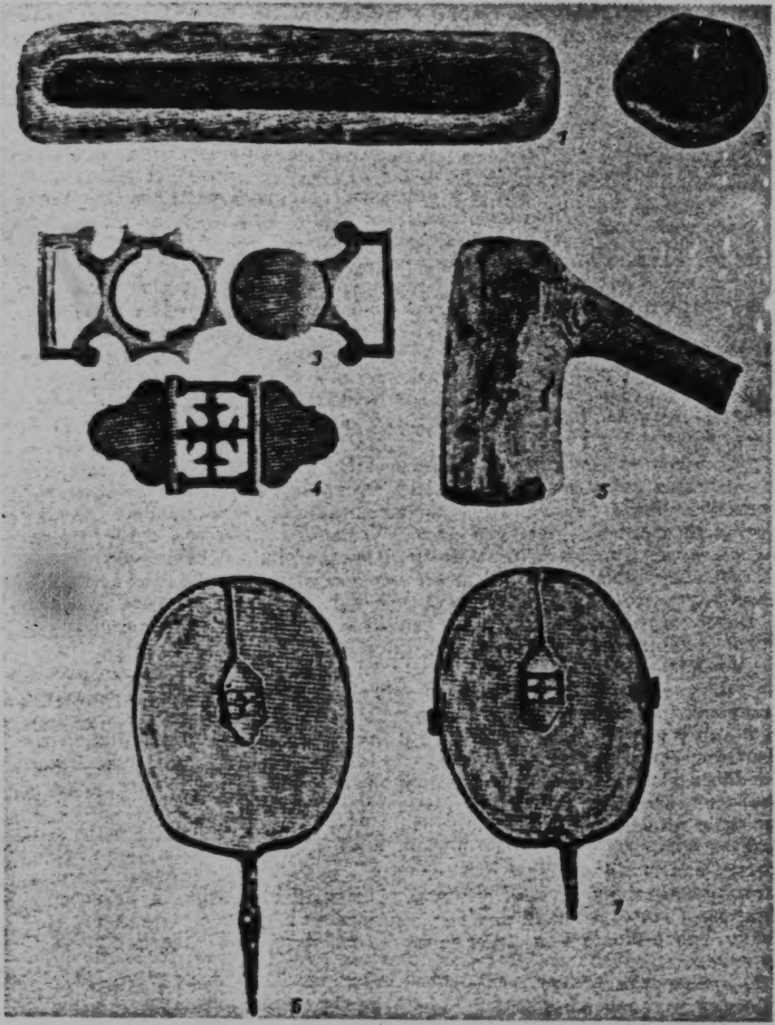
The division of labor within the family was traditional. Male and female occupations were sharply divided. Men and women looked after the stock but the former preferred to deal with horses (and even milk the mares), while women chiefly tended cattle. Everyone took part in the haymaking, but the mowing itself was a male occupation. Hunting and fishing were reserved for men. Woodworking, metalworking, and mammoth-ivory carving were male occupations, while the dressing of hide and fur, sewing clothes and footwear, making leather and clay vessels were reserved for women. Finally, it was the males who cut the timber and built the dwellings, while the women carried water, lit the fires and cooked the food. Hired workers, dependent poorer kinsmen, and, in ancient times, slaves in many cases performed both male and female tasks. 462 [466]

Means of Transportation

The ancient Yakut means of transportation were adapted to the barely passable taiga. Before the advent of the Russians, the Yakuts did not know of the wheeled carriage, and until very recently people in the more out of the way places had never seen wheels. Sledges and sledge harnesses were known; in the central regions the Yakut sledges were almost identical in shape to the Russian ones, but in the north they were straight-sided reindeer sledges. 493

In the old days, the Yakuts had their own particular type of sledge (silis syarga); the runners were not bent, but made of a piece of wood with a rootstock and had a slight natural curve. Yakut sledges are mentioned in 17th-century documents as a means of transportation. The most primitive form of harnessing was a strap attached to the saddle of a horse. In other cases shafts were used in the same way as the strap. Oxen were more often harnessed to sledges than horses. The ox was harnessed to shafts with a yoke; the Yakut yoke (*бурҕалдьы*, or *буулаҕа* and *сүгүрдэр*) is made in two pieces, very different from the Russian or Ukrainian ox-yoke, and like the sledge was evidently indigenous in origin. The Yakuts travelled on the sledges, and sometimes still do, both in winter and summer. 492

A more typical means of transportation was the horse (used both for riding and carrying packs). The Yakut packsaddle, the base of which was two wooden boards secured together at an angle, is similar in shape to the type used by the South Siberian pastoralists. The same thing can more or less be said of the riding saddle, except that in the case of the Yakuts it is higher, broader and thicker. The saddle frame was usually made of wood; the high, wide saddlebow was usually reinforced at the front with a stamped silver plate with a forged hook in the center for the reins; the low back was also encased in silver. Silver ornaments, incidentally, are characteristic of a later period and the older saddles (from excavations) are not adorned with this metal. The saddle frame was covered with a [581]



Smithing and potting implements: 1, 2—clay crucibles for melting silver and gold; 3, 4—wooden templets for casting silver belt buckles; 5—wooden hammer for mixing potter's clay; 6, 7—two halves of clay mold for casting silver and gold objects.

pillow. Richly ornamented cloth and leather sweatcloths and girths were placed under the saddle at the sides and on the cruppers, while side flaps hung down from the sides; the stirrups were usually made of metal, although a flexible, narrow strip of wood bent in a circle was sometimes used. 492 [53]

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964

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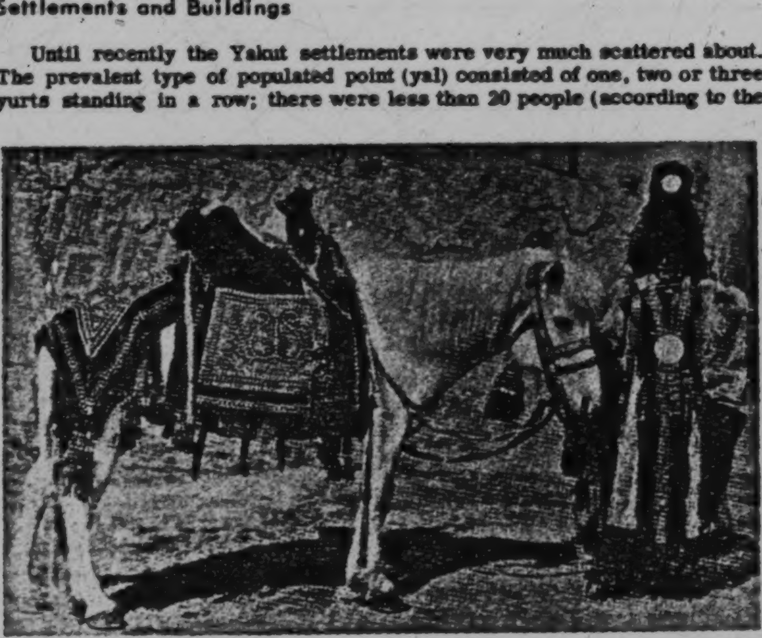
Yakut sleigh.

Another means of overland transportation was the ski, which was lined underneath with horsehide and not reindeer suede. The Yakut boats were no different from the Tungus ones. They had a canoe (tyy) made of birch-bark or else flat-bottomed and made from planks. The larger vessel—the karbaz—had sails and was evidently borrowed from the Russians. 481 281 501 [177]

Settlements and Buildings

Until recently the Yakut settlements were very much scattered about. The prevalent type of populated point (yal) consisted of one, two or three yurts standing in a row; there were less than 20 people (according to the 361



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Yakut woman with horse festively saddled.

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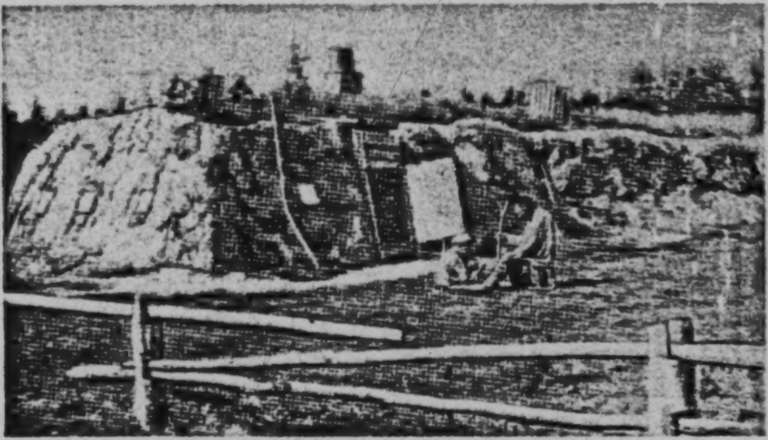

Dwelling of poor Yakut.

1926 census) in 70% of the populated points of Yakutiya. This was predominantly at the winter camps (kystyk). The summer camps (sayylyk) were usually larger—from 5 to 10 or more dwellings together. The scattered nature of the settlement was primarily due to the terrain and the type of economy and also to the desire to exploit separate alasy and river valleys scattered about the taiga. 36|

The predominant type of Yakut dwelling (d'ie) was the yurt or balagan. 342 It was a structure with a square base made of erect poles slanting slightly inwards, with a very gently sloping double roof, the overall effect of which was a truncated quadrilateral pyramid. The framework of the yurt consisted of four thick vertical columns at the corners, inserted in the ground, and a horizontal frame of four beams resting on top of them. In most of the yurts, apart from the four corner columns, there were two, four or eight additional ones (in the middle of the walls) supporting the beams. The four sides of the yurt usually faced the four points of the compass, with the entrance facing east. Parallel to the entrance, in the middle of the frame, running from south to north, there was a thick main beam, or two thinner ones alongside. The ends of the thinner beams rested on the main beam, while the other ends rested on the eastern and western beams of the framework and formed a solid, gently sloping double roof. The walls were made of thinner, upright beams or poles, the lower ends of which were inserted into the ground, while the others rested on the top frame close together. Small rectangular windows were made in the southern and western walls, in which were inserted panes; in the old days these panes were covered in the summer with mica or sometimes white cloth, bladder, or bits of glass (the latter were inserted in the birchbark frame); in the winter, pieces of ice were put in the windows. In the eastern wall they made an entrance with a one-piece, slightly inclined plank door covered with cowhide or some other such material. Bark was placed on top of the roof beams and then covered with earth; on the outside the walls were coated with clay mixed with cow dung, the coating being repeated quite often, sometimes every autumn. Around the walls on the outside [35] was a low earth embankment sometimes fortified with a wooden fence (central Yakutiya). The floor was usually made of earth, but the richer

342 people used wooden floors, under Russian influence. The size of the dwelling varied from 5 × 5 to 10 × 10 m, and in height was slightly higher than the head.

354 An essential part of every yurt was the hearth and the benches along the walls, as well as the simple uniform utensils. The hearth (ohokh) was usually built on the right of the entrance, close to the northeast corner. It comprised a low (about 25 cm, rectangular area made of clay inside a log frame; a cylindrical pipe, slanting slightly backwards, made of poles and coated on the inside with a thick layer of clay was built above the hearth; the bottom of the pipe was open at the front and acted as the mouth of the stove, while the top went through the roof and was almost always open (it was usually stuffed with something overnight); in the winter there was always a fire burning in the hearth to warm and illuminate the dwelling. The hearth was well ventilated and gave out a lot of heat as long as it was being fed with fuel, hence it used up a great deal of fuel.

352 353 The plank benches (oron), which were used for sleeping and sitting, stretched along all the walls, filling the gaps between the vertical columns and the bottom of the slanting wall. The benches were divided into different sections, each with its own name and purpose. The most respected bench was the one on the left of the entrance along the southern wall, from the middle to the corner, opposite the hearth—the so-called billirik; somewhat less honorable was the adjoining bench running from that corner along the western wall—the *бастын уҥа орон* (right-hand front bench); these two benches comprised the corner of honor. To the right was the head of the household's seat (*кэтэҕэриин*). The other benches on the left-hand side of the dwelling were intended for the young men, for workers and for ordinary male guests; on the right-hand side (towards the hearth) was the female half of the dwelling, where the women of the family and visiting women sat.

The furnishings in the dwelling consist of a small, round or square wooden table (ostuol) in the corner of honor, and several chairs (olokhmas) with the characteristic shape of a hollow cube with ribs made of flexible rods bent at a right angle and a seat made of a thin board; the furnishings also included various kinds of boxes and chests (made of wood and bound with leather), household utensils and so on; the quantity and quality of all the furnishings depended on the wealth of the householders.

343 A shed of the same design as the dwelling was usually built onto the northern side for the cattle, often under the same roof, though sometimes divided off from the living quarters by merely a thin wooden partition. There was a door leading from the dwelling to the cattle pen behind the hearth. The pen was built on the northern side so as to save some of the heat, but the close contact of the wintering cattle naturally increased the amount of dirt and made the air in the dwelling worse, where it was stuffy and dirty to begin with.

342 A small awning resembling a porch, and sometimes even a porchway (chaampy, *күүлэ*), was built outside in front of the entrance, particularly by the richer people.

The yurt was the ancient winter dwelling of the Yakuts; references to it can be found in 17th-century documents. In the 19th century the yurt also became the normal summer dwelling. The summer camp yurts were constructed in the same way as the winter ones, except for small differences (a light leather door on a frame and so on) and there was no cattle pen. Instead of the latter a summer calf pen (titik) was built

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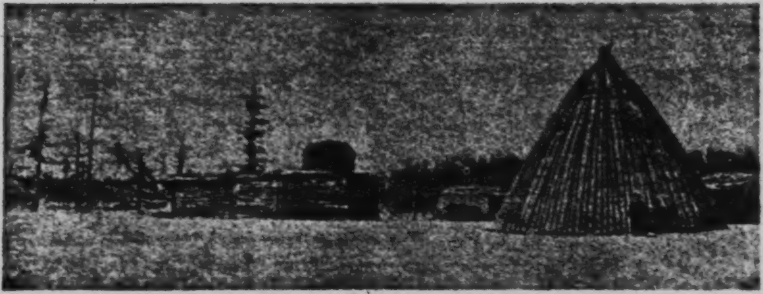
Hearth.

somewhere near the yurt, and there were also stalls for cattle, wattle pens for foals and so on. 342

In ancient times, however, the Yakut summer dwelling was different in type and was called the urusa or uraha (this type had practically disappeared by the end of the 19th century). The urasa was a conical construction made of poles covered with birchbark and was fairly spacious (4 to 6 m in diameter). The urasa differed from the conical birchbark chum of the taiga nomads by having a more solid structure; it had a square frame at the top made of beams which were attached to the top ends of four poles serving as the base; the birchbark was sewn together in strips in two layers, neatly and tightly; along the walls on either side were benches almost exactly as in the yurt; the urasa was heated by an open clay raised hearth. In the north this kind of dwelling (which was preserved much longer) was covered with turf instead of birchbark or on top of the birchbark; the rods of the frame in this case were more numerous and closer together. This earthen urasa or kalyman (kholuman) was a sort of intermediate form between the conical chum and the Yakut log dwelling. 342 178 [35]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Summer birchbark dwelling and six-cornered house.

There was another type of construction found among the Yakuts (either as a dwelling or as a cattle stall); it was a six- or eight-cornered log yurt with a pyramidal roof, identical to the well-known Buryat and Khakas structures. These yurts were observed, for example, in the regions near the mouth of the Vilyuy, in the Meginskiy and Borogonskiy ulusy, as well as in the Kolymskiy Okrug. They have been known since the 18th century. 342 178 [171]

During the 19th century the Russian type of structure—the log hut—gradually came into use among the Yakuts, particularly the better off people. At the beginning of the 20th century there were many such houses, particularly in areas near towns. A mixed type was often found: for example, a log hut built onto a yurt, a log hut with a Yakut hearth, and so on. 342 177

The living quarters and farm buildings of the family and the space surrounding them constituted the farmstead, which was fenced off with a solid fence of horizontal poles without any gates (in order to get inside the poles at one spot were removed from their supports, or else people simply stepped over them). Inside the enclosure were posts for tying up horses, and these were skillfully carved. In the summer camps the farms were often close together. 357

When speaking of structures, we should also mention the fact that in the old days the Yakuts knew how to make fortifications or ostrozhki, as they were called in the Russian texts of the 17th century. For example, in 1636-1637, during the campaign against the Kangalastsy, the Russian Cossacks found that "they had built strong forts with two walls covered with gravel, and surrounded by snow and water;" it was only after a two-day assault that the Cossacks managed to take one of these forts. In 1642 the Russians also took a Yakut fortress after great difficulty: ". . . the fort was made with two walls, the space between the walls was filled with earth, and there were log towers." At a later stage these fortifications disappeared, and no one has described them since in detail. But even in the 19th century it was possible to find special tower-like barns here and there, which belonged to the Toyons. 575 648 712 726

Clothing

The national Yakut costume had only been partly preserved by the beginning of the 20th century, having been replaced by Russian clothing or at least strongly influenced by the latter. The national cut and purely Yakut materials were preserved to a greater extent in the winter clothing. 291 177 178

The underclothing of the Yakuts in the old days consisted of leather 291 shorts (syald'yya), which have remained in use to the present day and [178] are the same for men and women. They are supplemented at the top by a fur stomach-warmer and below by leather leggings. The shirt (yrbakhy) [177] appeared later, evidently through Russian influence; it was made from Chinese blue cotton cloth or some other fabric, was the same in cut for men and women, and differed from the Russian shirt only by having a turned-down collar. The commonest outer clothing, both for men and women, was the son, a kaftan like single-breasted coat with a straight vent at the front; there was a fur version for the winter; in recent times it has become usual to cover it with some kind of cloth, but before, it used to be lined with suede. The summer son was made of cloth, but among the poorer people it was made of horsehide or cowhide with the fur on the inside. It was made by sewing four similar tapered strips together with the wider part at the bottom and with extra pieces in the form of small wedges below the belt; the sleeves were wide, puffed at the shoulders and narrow at the bottom. The ancient outer costume (sangyyakh) was retained as the festive dress for women, and to judge by 17th-century texts, [292] it was originally much more widespread and not confined to women. It was a very fine and richly ornamented long fur coat fitting at the waist with a long vent at the back, with fur trimming and various extra pieces sewn on. These fine garments were kept and handed down as a family treasure, predominantly among the toyon families; the cost of them at the end of the 19th century reached as much as 1000 rubles. The cut of the sangyyakh was close to the Altay chegedek (the Khakas sigidek and Buryat tsegdek) from which it differed by having sleeves. The very names "sangyyakh" and "chegedek" are etymologically related. It was the straight vent at the back which distinguished typical Yakut clothing from the double-breasted costume of the steppe nomads, which closed on the right side; the outer clothing of the Yakuts differed from the Tungus clothing in that the flaps came close together, whereas among the Tungus they did not, and the gap in between came close together, whereas among the Tungus they did not, and the gap in between at the chest or stomach was covered with a chest-piece. The outer clothing of the men was usually girdled with leather belts; among the richer people the belt was ornamented from end to end with silver or copper plaques. A sheathed knife and a steel for making fire were usually hung from the belt. There were also belts with silver plaques and wide silk sashes.

The shape of the headgear was fairly varied. Leaving aside the types borrowed from the Russians, the following kinds can be distinguished. The ancient fur cap (in later times, made of velveteen) was like a helmet with a sharp point and elongated sides in the form of earpieces; it was trimmed with squirrel or some other fur and was worn by both men and women. It was similar to the type worn by the Kazakhs. The festive women's hat, similar in style, though more dressy, differed from the previous type by having a high cloth top, flat at the front and back, with various embellishments, the chief of which was a silver-minted disk (tuohakhta); the part hanging down at the back of the neck was covered with some kind of expensive fur. These large ceremonial hats are typical only of the Yakuts. They also wore a typical Tungus-type cap made of reindeer fur. The most interesting of the summer hats was a wide-brimmed flat hat, undoubtedly an imitation of the Russian straw hat, but woven entirely of horsehair. In the summer, people very often wore Russian peaked caps, or else bound their heads (both men and women) with a kerchief. A characteristic feature of the Yakut winter clothing

291 was associated with the severe frost; this was a particular type of fur collar or mooyturuk made from rings of squirrel tails, so that the fur stood out on all sides; this collar was put round the neck in cold weather and covered both the nose and mouth; as the wearer breathed on it and the breath gradually froze, he kept moving it round so that there was always a dry spot opposite the mouth.

The Yakut heavy fur mittens were made with space for one finger and were attached by laces, by which they hung when taken off.

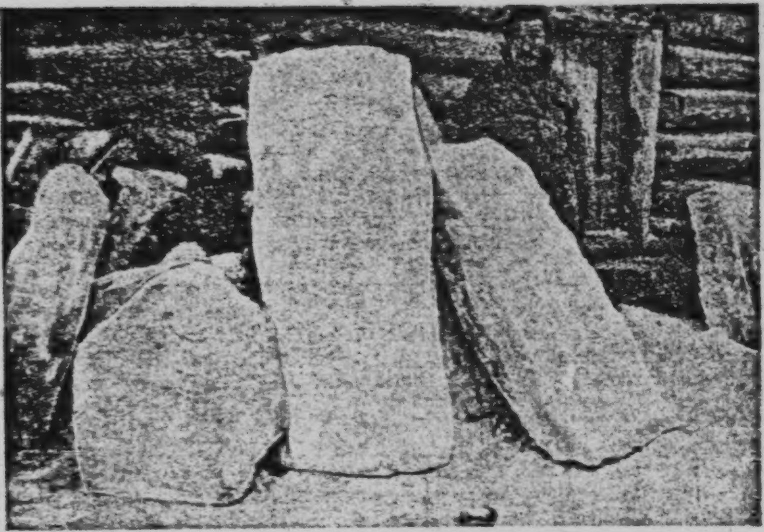
Typical of the footwear (eterbes) were high kneeboots made of undressed reindeer- or horse-hide, with the hair on the outside. The summer boots (saary) were made of soft leather with a soft sole; the top part was covered with cloth and in the case of women with embroidery; the tops of the boots were tied with laces. Underneath the top footwear they wore high stockings (keenche) made of fur, or, later, cloth made in the shape of the foot. Linings of dry grass were also put inside the boots, and frequently changed.

[531] 801 326 The decorations on the women's clothing were particularly lavish and varied. Apart from various types of embroidery, appliqué and trimming, women also wore metal (silver) adornments, including large pendants consisting of rows of interlinked parallel, patterned chains hanging from a semicircle (kyl'd'yy), silver earrings of the pendant type (*ытарҕа*), various patterned bracelets (*бөҕөх*), finger-rings (*биһилэх*), silver crucifixes (Christian influence) on massive openwork chains and so forth; all these embellishments, chiefly possessed by the toyon women, were very skillfully made by the Yakut smiths.

291 As regards children's clothing, there was no special type. In the poorer families, the children ran about naked or wore rags; the children of wealthier parents wore the same kind of garments as the adults, except for the size and greater number of adornments.

Food

262 [527] The diet of the Yakuts from the central ulusy before the Revolution consisted first of dairy products, second, fish products, after which came vegetable products, and, finally, meat. The variety, amount and quality of the food ranged between very wide limits in the various class groups. Dairy products were consumed mainly during the summer, and as far as possible stored up for the winter. Mare's milk was chiefly used to make kumys, a refreshing, nutritious and slightly intoxicating beverage, which the Yakuts drank readily and in large quantities. During the haymaking kumys was sometimes the staple diet; a great deal of it was drunk at summer festivals (*ыһыах*—the kumys festival). Over the last few decades before the Revolution, on account of the decline in horse-breeding and the development of agriculture, the comsumption of kumys dropped more and more. Mare's milk was not stocked for the winter. Cow's milk was not used very much in the fresh form, but was used to make a greater variety of products. First place among them was taken by the so-called suorat, or sora, a particular kind of thick sour milk with or without some cream added. In summer fresh suorat was the commonest food, but it was also used to make winter stocks; for this purpose it was kept in large birchbark vats, to which were added berries (blueberries), roots, bones (which dissolved in the lactic acid) and any left-over milk product, and as winter approached, the whole lot was frozen and kept in that form. The resulting tar was used in wintertime to make the drink butugas, to which was added, apart from the tar, water, a little flour, pine sapwood, roots, and so on. Cream skimmed from the milk was used in the fresh, whipped form; it was called *күөрчэх*, highly



Frozen sour milk.

rated as a dish for guests or an accompaniment for other dishes; but most often the cream was churned into butter, also a favorite food of the Yakuts. 262 Apart from normal melted butter, they made khayakh, a special variety of butter (made without removing the yuraga). Butter was readily consumed with the kumys, with bread, or simply without anything else in the liquid form; after frost or exhaustion, this drink quickly warms up the body and restores the strength; warm melted butter was sometimes drunk in large quantities at festivals, weddings, and so on. Naturally, the poorer people, and even the middle peasants, were only able to have such food on rare occasions. The Yakuts knew absolutely nothing of cheese [273] or of the milk vodka known to the southern Siberian pastoralists.

The most important vegetable food for the poorer people had long been pine or larch sapwood. This not very nutritious substitute was made in the dry form for the winter and mixed with butugas, and was sometimes even the chief component of the latter. Greenery and berries were used [263] as condiments for various dishes; the only berries not eaten by the Yakuts were raspberries, since they considered them to be unclean; nor did they eat mushrooms.

In the 19th century agricultural products, chiefly barley flour, began to come into use. The grain was processed by primitive methods. The flour was used to bake unleavened cakes which were eaten with butter or with kyuerchakh (they were baked in the hearth on wooden spikes or in a frying pan); they fried fritters in butter and also consumed salamaat, a thin porridge made of slightly roasted flour boiled in water with a little butter. Yakuts hardly knew about bread made with leavened dough. As regards vegetables, it was almost only in the Olekminskiy Okrug that they were known about and eaten.

A diet of fish was of exceptional importance in some of the northern regions where there were no cattle. In the central ulusy fish was eaten in particular by the poorer people who had no cattle, although it was also 262 a secondary diet for the wealthier groups in the population. In the summer, people used to eat fresh fish boiled in water or slightly fried (carp and other small fish), on spikes or in a frying pan (the scales were removed but the innards were left untouched). A great deal of fish was stocked up for the winter, pickled in bark-lined pits; the acidified and half-rotten fish—syma—was then frozen and used to make butugas as a substitute for milk tar. The more valuable types of fish, particularly sterlet, white salmon, and whitefish of various types, were consumed in the raw, frozen form.

With rare exceptions, meat was eaten only in the wealthier households. Most highly valued was horsemeat, but even among the rich it was not served too often. Beef was eaten more frequently. The meat of various other animals, especially in the northern hunting regions, was also eaten. It was usually boiled (though attempts were made not to overcook it), and sometimes roasted in the old manner on wooden spikes. Fat was specially highly valued. The carcasses of slaughtered cattle were kept for the winter in frozen form. The Yakuts did not eat certain types of wild animals and birds—beasts of prey, sea gulls, ravens, cuckoos and owls—and they refused to eat the brains of domestic animals. During the 19th century, under [177] Russian influence, bread began to be eaten and later salt, sugar and tea became part of the diet of the Yakuts. Dealers brought in vodka to the ulusy. [273]

Hygiene

The living conditions of the Yakuts before the Revolution were extremely 515 unhygienic. As a result of the filth, overcrowding and stagnant air in the yurt with its earthen floor and cattle-shed right next door conditions were completely abnormal. Furthermore, the Yakuts, particularly in winter, rarely washed themselves, and the washing of clothes was practically unknown.

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that there were frequent 164 epidemics. Skin diseases were particularly rampant, and mange, ringworm, ulcers, and so on were due to the permanent contamination of the skin. Eye diseases (trachoma, etc.) were very common, particularly among the older people, a large number of whom lost their sight. According to the 1915 census, there were 110 blind people per 10,000 Yakuts. True leprosy existed in some of the damp, marshy regions; isolation shelters for lepers [744] were arranged in out of the way spots. Tuberculosis was quite common.

Nervous disorders were widespread in the northern regions of Yakutiya, particularly among women, which was due to the difficult living conditions, exhausting work, and to a number of women's diseases, etc. The nervous disorders took such forms as Arctic hysteria, the so-called menerik, which is something like epilepsy; the sick woman throws a fit during which she shouts and raves until she falls asleep exhausted. Another, similar nervous disorder was *омурэх*; the symptoms are an unconscious, involuntary imitation of anything which frightens or astonishes the sufferer.

The Yakuts had no rational method of treating these ailments. They 757 often used primitive domestic cures such as cauterizing, licking the pus from sores and so on. It was usual during sickness to resort to quack 755 doctors and shamans.

Social Structure

The social structure of the Yakuts, as it had developed by the time of 619 the October Revolution, was a peculiar mishmash of complex forms of

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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developed class relationships and certain very archaic survivals of ancient 619
times. By the time the Russians arrived in the first half of the 17th century,
the Yakuts had divided up into independent tribes. The largest and strongest
of these were the Kangalastsy and Nams on the left bank of the Lena, and
the Megins, Borogons, Betuns and Baturustsy between the Lena and the
Amga; these very large tribes (to judge by the Russian tribute registers) [161]
numbered from 2000 to 5000 persons each. The smaller tribal group-
ings, some of which were independent and some of which belonged to those
mentioned above, were reckoned in dozens. In the Russian sources these
tribes are called "volosts," but the Yakut name for them was evidently
d'on or aymakh. These tribes often warred with one another, and some-
times banded together temporarily for joint operations. All members of 619
one tribe were considered fellow clansmen, which, among other things,
was indicated by the fact that the "volosts" were exogamic groups. In 614
turn, the tribes divided into smaller clan groups. The bond between fellow
clansmen showed up in the custom of mutual assistance and vendetta,
which, incidentally, was often replaced by blood money.

At this period, however, the clan-tribal structure was already in a
state of decomposition. The tribes and clans were headed by the military
aristocracy—the toyons. These possessed large herds of cattle and em- [466]
ployed the labor of slaves and dependent fellow clansmen on their farms;
they were also the military leaders. Heading detachments of armed servants
and junior fellow clansmen, the toyons raided each other's territory, and 701
frequently looted the farms of the free members of the community, 614
seizing their cattle and destroying their economic independence. These 622
toyon wars and raids were one of the factors which speeded up the decom-
position of the clan commune. The ruined members of the commune were
reduced to the status of "balyksyts" (poor people without cattle, or fisher-
men), or else became the indentured slaves of the toyons. Most of the slaves [466]
(kuluts or bokans) originated in this way.

The system of slavery among the Yakuts was fairly peculiar in form, 622
containing certain patriarchal elements. The number of slaves was small;
even the richer toyons had no more than 15 or 20, and much more frequently 466
there were one to three slaves for each master. The slave usually had
his own family and often lived in a separate yurt. Slavery was hereditary.
Some of the slaves—the adult males—were part of the armed band of the
toyon. On the other hand, cases were known in which the slaves led a
hard life and their masters treated them cruelly, and we also know of the
manifestation, although embryonic, of class feeling against exploitation
(flight by groups of slaves and so on).

The problem of whether or not there was feudalism among the Yakuts 114
before the Russians arrived still remains unsolved in Soviet historical-
ethnographic literature. 642

Some writers (S. V. Bakhrushin and O. V. Ionova) think that early feudal
relations among the Yakuts began to form in the pre-Russian period; they
consider the presence of groups of semidependent people "living close to"
the toyons, as well as the custom of lending cattle for grazing (the later
khahaas), to be signs of this. Tokarev considers that a feudal-type relation-
ship only began to form among the Yakuts after they had been annexed to
Russia.

As regards land ownership, the older communal-clan system was still 423
in force just before the Russians arrived. The communal form of land use
not only predominated in forest hunting grounds and pastures, but the
fisheries and even the meadows were still by and large in common use.
Nevertheless, the meadows and fisheries had already been taken over to

Nevertheless, the meadows and fisheries had already 423
been taken over to 622

some extent by the toyons. The seizure of them was accompanied by a hard struggle since the communes resisted the toyon claims to their own land.

Such, in general terms, was the social structure of the Yakuts by the 648
time the Russians arrived. Tsarist policy between the 17th and 19th centuries speeded up the development of social relations, so that Yakut society just before the October Revolution had already changed very much from what it had been three centuries ago. Nevertheless, many phenomena proved extremely stable and retained their archaic nature until recent 565
times. Just before the Revolution the division of the Yakuts into strata according to the property they possessed was extremely marked. Most 433
of the population did not even have enough cattle for the hunger norm (this norm, when the grade of the livestock was low, was considered to be 231
two head of livestock per person), whereas in the few toyon households there were several dozen head of livestock per person. However, the unequal distribution of the livestock was by no means anything new for the Yakuts. But the question of land was different. The system which had grown up in 177
the domain of land tenure was of comparatively recent origin. Since the 423
arrival of the Russians in Yakutiya, the process of decomposition of the 622
ancient communal-clan system of using the meadowland had been stepped up. The toyons were vigorously seeking to acquire the common lands. The development of private land ownership by the toyons continued to 648
the 1760's, when certain measures introduced by the Russian administra- 423
tion gave it a new direction. In 1765, Yakuts were forbidden to buy or sell land, and in the next few years, through the activity of the Yakut Tribute Commission, the distribution of land in accordance with the so-called "sable" and "fox" taxes or parts of them was introduced among the Yakuts. Later on, in about 1820, this distribution of land assumed the form of the so-called "class system" of land usage, which legalized the extremely unequal distribution of the land, though, on the surface, it seemed to be something like common land usage. This "class system," which was later modified, had assumed the following form by the beginning of the 20th century.

The unit of measurement of land among the Yakuts was the "rick" 423
(*күрүө*), a plot of land from which one hayrick could be mown (the size of [804]
the rick ranged from 10 to 30 cartloads, sometimes as many as 40 or 60). These allotments made up plots (*өлбүгэ*) which were extremely varied in size, depending on the "class," and there were three or four "classes." One first-class plot (*бастыҥ* or *улахан өлбүгэ*) was equal to two second-class plots (*орто өлбүгэ*) and three or four third-class plots (kenniki or *кыччыгый өлбүгэ*). The population was also divided into three or four 565
classes: the toyon households belonged to the first class, and received a 423
first-class plot, the middle households were usually assigned to the second 622
class and the poorer people to the third and fourth classes, each receiving the corresponding clan plot. Thus, the system itself gave the toyons plots of land which were three or four times larger than those of the poorer people. It is true that in return for this the toyons had somewhat greater obligations, but the difference in their extent was extremely small. However, this inequality was by no means the only thing. The toyons actually possessed much more land, having seized it in a variety of different ways. For example, they had several plots, rather than just one, by registering [92]
them in the names of their children, workers and so on. It was also the custom to give officials (who were more often than not themselves toyons) additional plots of land, so-called *укаас-күрүө* (from the Russian word "ukaz" [edict]), for which, incidentally, there was no payment. The influential toyons also obtained extra plots called ugayy (or kharyy).

423 565 Furthermore, the toyons frequently enjoyed the right of possessing larger plots, sometimes through inheritance, cleared from the forest or formed at the site of a drained lake. The leasing of land was also common.

In the second half of the 19th century the custom of equalizing of the land each year in accordance with the yield of grass came into use. The harvest was evaluated by elected "deputies," and those whose harvest was poorer than it should have been in view of the plot had the right to an extra quota of hay, and vice versa. This was called bebierke (from the Russian word poverka [adjustment]). But in actual fact this custom did not reduce inequality, for the "deputies" always acted in favor of the more influential (toyon) section of the population, to which they themselves very often belonged.

Generally speaking, the toyons possessed a large proportion of the available land, and the best part, to boot. For example, in 1908 two-thirds of all the land in the First Ospetskiy Nasleg in the Dyupsyunskiy Ulus belonged to five toyon households. In the Suntarskiy Ulus the toyons, who made up only 7% of the total population, possessed approximately half the land. By 1917, 55% of all the usable land was possessed by the rich people. By owning land and livestock the toyons were in a position to exploit the needy masses of the population. The forms that the exploitation took were greatly varied; they included elements characteristic of capitalist relations and the older patriarchal-feudal forms, as well as hidden survivals of slavery. For example, it was 466 the practice to hire laborers—khamnachyts—usually for a definite period, particularly for haymaking; they were hired to carry firewood, 565 build yurts and so on. They were paid either in money or in kind; and the method used was usually the typical Yakut system of payment (remuneration in advance), which was called "to take a contract" from the toyon for this or that work. This system of contracting was very advantageous to the richer people, since they then had complete power over the laborers. In return for a paltry sum received in advance, the poor person was sometimes in the toyon's clutches for a long time to come.

The system of contracting was also applied in other cases; advances were paid by the toyons for the supply of a whole variety of products, ranging from butter and hay right down to wild duck eggs. This system was a form of extremely cruel exploitation. One observer (V. F. [114] Troshchanskiy, an exiled member of Narodnaya Volya)[3] wrote outright that the "welfare of the population will not be improved as long as this system exists in its present form."

Another very common form of exploitation was the handing over of the milch cattle to the poor people by the toyons for their use and for feeding, the so-called system of khahaas. At an earlier stage (at the beginning of the 19th century) the livestock was taken over, usually for a year, from spring to spring, but at the end of the 19th century it was more common to take over the cattle for only the summer (the distribution of livestock for feeding during the winter—uostur—was a separate process). In return for use of the cow, the poor peasant had to pay the toyon, as was the custom, 30 pounds of melted butter and 12-15 poods of tar (frozen sour milk) in the autumn; sometimes this was replaced or supplemented by compulsory service for the benefit

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[3] A revolutionary Narodnik organization.—Ed.

466 565 of the toyon. This custom was a very typical and often extremely cruel form of exploitation. The winter upkeep of the livestock was a still more burdensome, enslaving agreement; in return for a head of cattle, the toyon usually paid 1 ruble, 50 kopeks or 2 rubles for the whole winter, whereas in actual fact the upkeep cost at least 5 rubles, and so it was only the poor peasants driven by need who entered into such agreements.

A still more typical custom, the origin of which in ancient times was connected with mutual assistance between clan members, but which later became in fact one of the forms of exploitation, was kumalaanism. A kumalaan was a poor peasant, a disabled person, an orphan or sometimes all the members of an impoverished family, who were assigned by the whole community to live for a certain time with a rich man or wealthy kinsman who would maintain them. Officially, the adoption of a kumalaan was regarded as an act of charity, and a way of helping a kinsman in need. But in actual fact the custom concealed the cruelest exploitation of unpaid labor. In many cases it was a disguised form of slavery and lasted a long time.

Another form of disguised slavery was the sale of children, which flourished particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug. Parents who had reached the stage of abysmal poverty were often forced to sell their children, and well-off Yakuts sometimes bought them (when they had no children of their own) in order to bring them up, but more often in order to have unpaid labor. Their treatment of them was usually barbaric; they were half-starved and forced to do exhausting work. The demand for children was so extensive that in the Olekminskiy Okrug there were professionals (old women) who traded in children as an occupation.

444 There were also various forms of commercial exploitation, some of which, again, were inherent in the Yakut conditions. One such form for Yakutiya was the activity of the so-called "city-men." These were people, mainly from distant regions, who constantly made trips to towns where they had business contacts and sold and bought commodities on behalf of their fellow villagers in return for a commission from the latter. The city-men, apart from the agreed fee, could always obtain extra profits by speculating on the difference in prices, obtaining credit, and so on. Little by little the city-man began to trade in imported goods in his own ulus and turned into a full-fledged merchant. This was one of the ways in which the new Yakut commercial bourgeoisie formed side by side with the semifeudal toyons.

[426] By the end of the 19th century, the Yakut commercial bourgeoisie was already a strong force. The Yakut merchants not only exploited their own fellow townsmen, but also penetrated into the taiga, into the Evenk and Yukagir hunting camps, where they gave the hunters liquor and enslaved them in usurious debt. In the trading regions, in the outlying parts of Yakutiya, Yakut (and Russian) trade capital enslaved the people in the most merciless ways.

434 As a result of all this highly varied and extremely cruel exploitation, the position of the masses of the Yakut population was lamentable. The poor people sometimes went hungry the whole year around, even in the summer, during the peak season when the hard work of haymaking needed a sound diet. "The Yakut does not take much notice of the fact that his children are always half-starved," wrote V. F. Troshchanskiy, "both because this is the normal state of affairs for the majority of Yakut children, and also because he himself, his wife, his very old parents, his livestock, his dog and his cat are half-starved

the whole of their lives, and only occasionally eat their fill . . . it is a country of systematic starvation."[4] But the Yakut toiling masses were particularly badly off during the long and severe Yakutiyan winter. "The periods of hunger," wrote another observer, "when there is absolutely nothing to eat, when all the crumbs have been picked up and consumed, when the cows carrying calves are not milked, and nature, paralyzed by the cold, firmly resists all attempts to find food, are repeated every year and two-thirds of the Yakut population have to suffer for a fairly prolonged period on this account."[5] 434 [114]

On the other hand, individuals with fortunes of tens of thousands of rubles stood out among the wealthy Yakut hierarchy. The wealthy estates developed mainly through trade and various kinds of speculation, although the owners did not hesitate to apply the old patriarchal-feudal methods of exploitation in amassing their wealth.

Crushed by the omnipotence of the toyons, the masses of poor people in the ulus hardly dared to protest or fight for their rights. It was only now and then that the toyon oppression gave rise to outbursts of protest, but these were sporadic and promptly suppressed. This was the fate of the revolt of Vasiliy Manchara (1830-1850), hero of the Yakut legends. 669

Given the sharp class contradictions, it was extremely characteristic that certain very archaic survivals were retained in the Yakut social structure and left on it their own strange imprint. Some of these survivals were nothing more than form devoid of its original content. 624

Right up to the Revolution the Yakuts retained their division into clans (*[illegible]*). But the clans were purely administrative units legalized by the "Native Code" of 1822, although they were historically descended from the ancient clans of the clan-tribal stage.

At the head of these administrative clans stood elected elders (who were called in the old-fashioned Yakut language "princelings" (kinees, or achchygyy kinees—"small princeling"). Several clans banded into a nasleg, which was also governed by an elected elder (in actual fact often hereditary), known in the Yakut language as ulakhan kinees or "great prince," who together with the clan elders made up the "clan administration." A group of naslegs formed an ulus, at the head of which there was an elected ulus head and a "native council." The ulusy, and also some of the naslegs, and even the clans, were historically associated with the ancient Yakut tribes, whose names they continued to bear—for example, the Meginskiy, Borogonskiy, Baturusskiy, Namskiy, Western and Eastern Kangalasskiy and other ulusy, the Betyunskiy, Batulinskiy, Ospetskiy and other naslegs. 614 623 619

At the end of the 19th century there were in all 17 ulusy, divided into 230 naslegs and 934 clans in the Yakut district (in the four okrugs—Yakutskiy, Vilyuyskiy, Verkhoyanskiy and Kolymskiy, since in the fifth—Olekminskiy Okrug—the ulusy were replaced by volosts of the Russian type).

Only the terminology of the tribal structure was retained in this administrative system. In actual fact, the tribal administrations and native councils were only organs of power of the ruling toyon stratum 648 614

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[4] V. F. Troshchanskiy. Nabroski o yakutakh Yakutskogo okruga (Notes on the Yakuts in the Yakutskiy Okrug). Kazan', 1911, p. 17.

[5] V. L. Seroshevskiy. Yakuty (opyt etnograficheskogo issledovaniya), 1 (The Yakuts [Attempt at an Ethnographic Study]). St. Petersburg, 1896, p.423.

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(naturally, subordinate in turn to the tsarist administration); those 614 who sat at the head of them, the elders and chief elders, were either toyons in origin, or mere servants who obeyed them implicitly. The clan and nasleg meetings (munnyakh), at which the poor people dared not say a word, played the same part.

Thus, the frequently expressed opinion that the clan structure was retained among the Yakuts right up to the 20th century is a profound error.

Just as erroneous is the opinion of certain ethnographers that there 611 were elements of the matriarchate among the Yakuts. This view is based on the fact that there was a division of the aga-uus (paternal clan) into 614 smaller groups, iye-uuha (literally, "maternal clan"). The latter do indeed figure in the 19th-century official documents under the name of "tribal clans." But, despite the Yakut name, these small groups were not genuine maternal clans; kinship and descent were not reckoned on the female but on the male side. The name "iye-uus" is evidently to be explained by the fact that these subdivisions were descended from one clan progenitor, though from different wives.

More direct, although also more or less modified, survivals of 226 primitive-communal relations were retained by the Yakuts in certain characteristic customs, such as, for example, elements of collectivism in 223 fishing. The Yakuts retained the custom of communal net-fishing in rivers and lakes belonging to individual naslegs and clans. The catch, which was often an extremely abundant one, was divided on the spot among those taking part as well as among the onlookers (though the latter received less, admittedly). In the north there was a similar custom for moulting geese, which were caught by tens of thousands.

The custom of mutual gifts (belekh) was also very archaic. The 431 Yakut would visit a relative or friend, sometimes at a far-away spot, and receive a gift from his host, as though in gratitude for the visit; the gift would be a horse, saddle, a certain amount of meat, and so on, and in return, according to custom, he would invite the giver to visit him, although it might be a long time after, and present him with a gift of approximately the same value. These gifts were often timed to coincide with weddings, though they were sometimes presented independently.

The custom of hospitality was also observed. Hosts had to regale a 574 guest visiting them, even though he might be a complete stranger, with the same food that they ate themselves. Since this custom clashed with the capitalist psychology, reared on commercial relationships, it was regarded in many cases as an inevitable evil which everyone tried to avoid in every way he could; this often resulted in comic episodes in which the hosts (more often than not wealthy people) hastily hid away the food they were about to eat when they saw a guest approaching, while the latter resorted to various tricks in order to find where the food was hidden. According to the old custom, the host was also obliged to invite relatives and neighbors whenever a beast was slaughtered and to offer them meat. Nonobservance of this custom gave rise to public censure.

Apart from these individual customs, the Yakut society admittedly 565 retained the characteristic, half-conscious patriarchal ideology, which was clearly not a reflection of their true relationships, although it 614 served the interests of the toyons, who knew how to make use of it. The toyons liked to style themselves the forefathers, heads and sponsors of their clans; they skillfully fomented various interclan quarrels (usually over land), thereby sustaining the fiction of community of clan interests. 565 A poor kinsman used to call a toyon who had robbed him of his posses- 614 sions aga (father), and was expected to look upon him as his "benefactor."

Family Customs

The primary unit in the social structure of the Yakuts had long been 594 the family (kergen or yal), which consisted of husband, wife and children, sometimes with the inclusion of other relatives living in the same house. The married sons were usually regarded as a separate household. The [595] family was monogamous, but not too long ago (at the beginning of the 19th century) polygamy also existed among the wealthier section of the population, although the number of wives did not usually exceed two or three. In such cases the wives lived apart, each one running a separate household; the Yakuts explained this custom as a convenient way of looking after the livestock, which were distributed among several wives.

Marriage was preceded, sometimes for a long interval, by matchmaking. 584 There were also traces of exogamy (known from the 17th-century documents); until quite late, males tried to pick their wives from a different [582] clan, while the richer people, not satisfied with this, sought their brides as far as possible in other naslegs or even other ulusy. Having selected the bride, the groom or his parents sent their relatives as matchmakers. The latter, using special ceremonies and conventional language, sought to obtain the consent of the future bride's parents to the marriage, and on the extent of the bride-price (khalyym, or suluu). The consent of the girl herself was not asked at all in the old days. The bride-price 583 consisted of livestock, but the extent of it varied considerably, from one or two to many dozen head; the bride-price always included the meat of a slaughtered beast. At the end of the 19th century there was a strong trend towards taking the bride payment in actual money. Some of the payment (kurum) was spent on the wedding feast (in the 17th-century documents, the word kurum sometimes meant the bride payment as a whole). The payment was considered compulsory, and a girl who married without it considered herself dishonored. The suitor was assisted by relatives, 584 sometimes even by distant kinsmen, in arranging the payment, thus showing the ancient view of a wedding as an all-clan affair. The relatives of the bride also took part in distributing the payment obtained. On his side, the suitor received a dowry (enn'e), partly in livestock and meat, but more often in clothing and utensils; the value of the dowry averaged half the value of the bride-price.

The clan also played an important part in the actual wedding ceremony, 585 which was attended by a large number of guests, relatives of the bride and groom, neighbors and so on. The festivities lasted several days and consisted of extensive feasting, different rituals and amusements, games, dancing, and so on. Not only did the bride and groom refrain from occupying the central place in all this festivity, they hardly took part at all.

In similar fashion to the wedding ceremony, the kinship terminology 601 has also retained traces of the earlier forms of marriage. The name for the son—uol—actually means boy or youth; the word for daughter—kyys—means girl or little girl; father is *aga* (literally, "older"); wife is oyokh, but in some places the wife is simply called d'akhtar (woman), emeekhsin ("old woman") and so on; the husband is er, the older brother is ubay (bii), the younger brother is ini; the elder sister is ed'iy (agas) and the younger sister is balys. The last four terms are also used to denote uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, and other relatives. Generally speaking,

the Yakut system of kinship is close to the systems used by a number 601
of Turkic peoples.

The position of women both in the family and in public life was inferior. 562 The husband, the head of the family, enjoyed despotic power, and the wife could not even complain of harsh treatment, which was a fairly common occurrence, if not at the hands of the husband, then at the hands of his relatives. A woman from another tribe, defenseless and lacking in all rights, was burdened with hard work when she became part of a new family.

The position of older people who were decrepit and no longer able 888 to work was also difficult. Little care was shown for them, they were given little to eat and poorly clothed, sometimes even reduced to complete destitution.

The position of children, despite the fact that the Yakuts loved their 853 children, as pointed out by many observers, was also rather unfortunate. The birth rate was very high among the Yakuts and most families produced [163] from 5 to 10 children, sometimes as many as 20 or even more. However, the bad living conditions, poor food and inattention resulted [165] in very high child mortality. Apart from their own children, many families, particularly those in which there were few children, often adopted children, 597 whom they often simply bought from the poorer people.

Newborn babies were washed by the fire in the hearth and rubbed 854 with cream. This operation was repeated fairly frequently later on. The mother breast-fed her child for some time, as long as 4 or 5 [853] years, although in addition the child received a horn of cow's milk. The Yakut cradle was a long box made of thin, bent pieces of wood, in which the wrapped baby was placed, strapped in and left for some time, without being removed. The cradle had a groove to drain away the urine. Older children usually crawled about the earthen floor together with 855 the animals, either half-naked or completely naked, and were left to 184 themselves; sometimes they were attached to the table on a long strap to prevent them from falling into the fire. The children of the poorer people were trained to work from an early age, and had to carry out work according to their strength—such as collecting brush in the forest, looking after smaller livestock, and so on; the girls were trained in domestic duties. The children of the toyons received more attention, were mollycoddled and generally spoiled.

The children had few toys. These were usually wooden figures of 524 animals, tiny bows and arrows, little houses and model utensils, made by the parents or sometimes by the children themselves; and the girls had dolls with model clothes, blankets, pillows and so on. The games of the Yakut children were simple and rather monotonous. The absence of noisy group games is characteristic; generally speaking, when the children of the poorer Yakuts grew up, they were quiet and sluggish.

Religion

Even in the second half of the 18th century, many of the Yakuts had 771 been baptized, and in the 19th century all Yakuts were registered as Orthodox. Although the transition to Orthodoxy was motivated by and large by material considerations (various privileges and grants for those baptized), the new religion gradually became part of their everyday life. In the corner of their dwellings there hung icons; the people wore crucifixes (the large silver crucifix-type embellishments worn by the women are interesting), went to church and many of them, particularly

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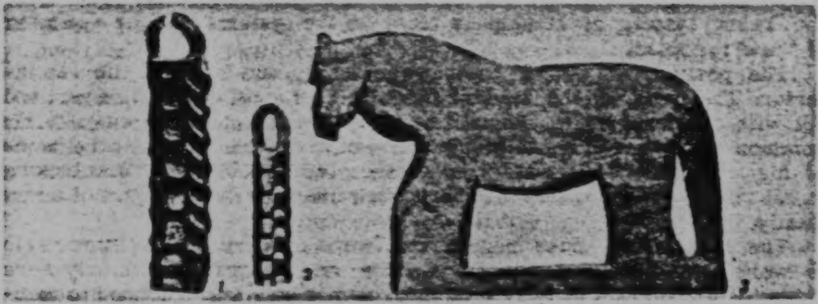

Wooden toys: 1—ox, 2—cow; 3—horse.

771 the toyons, were zealous Christians. Actually, this is understandable, since Christianity was far better suited than shamanism to satisfying the class interests of the rich people. Nevertheless, the old, pre-Christian religion did not entirely disappear, and the older beliefs, although somewhat modified through the influence of Christian ideas, still kept their hold; and the shamans, the ministers of the old cult, still enjoyed authority, although they were forced to some extent to conceal their activities from the tsarist administrators and Orthodox clergy. Shamanism and the animistic beliefs associated with it seem to have been the most persistent element of the old Yakut religion.

756 171 The Yakut shamanism was closest of all to the Tungus type. The Yakut shaman tambourine (wide-rimmed and oval) was exactly the same as the Tungus tambourine; the costume was also the Tungus type, except that the Yakut shamans officiated with uncovered heads. The similarity involved more than just their outward appearance; it also showed up in the more important details of the beliefs and rituals.

756 The Yakut shaman (ойуун) was considered the professional attendant of the spirits. According to Yakut belief, anyone chosen by the spirits to serve them could become a shaman, but the shamans were usually from the same families: "in a clan where a shaman has once appeared, he does not pass away," said the Yakuts. Apart from men shamans, there were also women shamans (*удаҕан*), who were considered to be [753] even more powerful. A sign of readiness to adopt the profession of shaman was a nervous ailment, which was interpreted as evidence that the person had been "elected" by the spirits; this was followed by a period of training under the guidance of an old shaman, and finally by a ritual public consecration.

756 776 It was thought that the spirit electing the shaman became his patron spirit (emeget), and that it was the soul of an important shaman who had died earlier. Its image in the form of a flat copper effigy was worn among the other pendants with the shaman costume; the image was also called an emeget. The patron spirit imbues the shaman with strength and knowledge. The shaman sees and hears only through his emeget. Besides the latter, every shaman has his own animal double (iye-kyyl, "mother beast") in the form of an invisible eagle, stallion, bull, bear and so on. Finally, besides these personal spirits, every shaman was associated with a number of other spirits in human or bestial form when casting his spells. The different categories of spirits associated with the shaman's activity had their own specific names.

[753] The most important and largest group of spirits were the abaahy (or abaasy), devouring spirits to whose activity certain diseases were attributed.

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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attributed. The believing Yakuts considered that the cure of disease 776 by a shaman actually consisted in elucidating which abaasy had caused 756 the disease, battling against them or offering them a sacrifice, and expelling them from the patient. According to shamanistic belief, the abaasy lived in tribes or clans partly in the "upper" and partly in the "lower" world, as well as in the "middle" world, the earth.

The spirits living in the "upper" world were offered sacrifices of 776 horses, and those in the "lower" world of cattle. Close to the abaasy 775 were the yor, evil spirits, for the most part minor ones, who were the souls of people who had died prematurely or violently, and also the souls 756 of deceased shamans, sorcerers and so on. The ability to cause people harm was attributed to these spirits, but they also lived in the "middle" world (on the earth and around it). The beliefs about them are very close to the Russian superstitions regarding "unclean" or possessed dead persons. Small spirits called kelens were considered to assist the shaman to do various tricks while he was performing.

Among the important deities in the shamanistic pantheon first place is taken by the powerful and awe-inspiring Uluu-Toyon, who was head of the "upper" world spirits and patron of shamans: "he created the shaman and taught him to fight against all evils; he gave people fire." Living in the upper world (on the western side of the third heaven), Uluu-Toyon was also able to come down to earth in the form of larger animals such as the bear, elk, ox or black stallion. Below Uluu-Toyon were other more or less powerful deities, each of which had its own name and epithet, its residence and its special interest. Examples of these are Ala Buuray Toyon (Arsan Duolay or Allara-Ogon'or, "the old man from underground"), head of the underground abaasy, creator of everything harmful and unpleasant, Aan Arbatyy Toyon (or Arkhakh Toyon), who caused consumption and so on.

The presence of the important deities in the shamanistic pantheon [170] of the Yakuts distinguishes their shamanism from the Tungus type (the Tungus did not believe in the important gods to a very large extent) and brings it close to the shamanism of the Altay-Sayan peoples. Generally speaking, it is a feature of a later stage of the development of shamanism.

The main duties of the shamans were to "cure" sick people and animals and to "avert" all catastrophies. Their devices could be reduced to casting spells (accompanied by singing, dancing, banging of a tambourine, and so on), usually at night, during which the shaman worked himself into a frenzy and, according to Yakut superstition, his soul flew up to join the spirits, or else the spirits entered his body; his magic enabled him to overcome and chase out the wicked spirits, to learn about the sacrifices required by the spirits, to make them, and so on. On the side, during the ritual the shaman became a diviner, answering various questions put to him by the onlookers, and also showing various magic tricks which were supposed to increase his authority and make people more frightened of him.

In return for his offices the shaman received a fee, particularly if his spells were successful, which usually varied between 1 ruble and 25 rubles or more. Furthermore, the shaman was always given food and drink and allowed to eat the sacrificial meat, part of which he sometimes took home. Although the shamans usually had their own households, which were at times of quite a size, the fee for their magic constituted a considerable item of their income. The shaman's demand for a sacrifice was a great burden to the population.

326 756 The same kind of superstitious awe with which the shamans were regarded was also applied to the smiths, particularly hereditary smiths who were believed to have mysterious powers. The smith was considered to some extent related to the shaman. "The smith and the shaman are out of one nest." Smiths could treat illnesses, give advice and even make prophecies. The smith forged iron pendants for the shaman's costume, and this fact alone made him awesome. The smith had special power over the spirits for, according to Yakut superstition, spirits were afraid of the sound of iron and the noise of the smith's bellows.

776 782 Apart from shamanism, the Yakuts had another cult, connected with their livelihood. The chief deity in this cult was Bay-Bayanay, the spirit of the forest and patron of hunting and fishing. According to some beliefs, Bayanay had 11 brothers. They brought luck in hunting and fishing, so that the hunter exorted them to help him before he went out hunting, and after a successful hunt made them offerings of some of the catch by throwing pieces of fat into the fire or smearing the images of Bayanay with blood.

776 The belief in ichchi or "masters" of different objects was evidently connected with hunting and fishing. The Yakuts believed that all animals, trees, and different phenomena of nature possessed ichchi, just as certain domestic articles, such as knives and axes. The ichchi themselves were neither good nor evil. In order to placate the "masters" of the mountains, cliffs, rivers, forests and so on, at various places—river crossings, mountain passes and so on—the Yakuts left small offerings of pieces of meat, butter and other food, and also scraps of cloth. The worship of
776 825 certain animals came close to this cult as well. The bear was an object of great reverence and as a result people avoided calling it by name, were afraid of killing it, and considered it to be a transformed sorcerer. The eagle was also worshipped and called toyon kyyl ("mister beast"), and so were the raven, hawk and certain other birds and animals.

776 All these beliefs go back to the ancient means of livelihood of the Yakuts, and pastoralism also gave rise to its own set of beliefs and rituals. These comprised the cult of the deities of fertility, which was not preserved for very long and is therefore less known. Among these beliefs was clearly the belief in ayyy, benevolent deities who bestowed various benefits. It was thought the ayyy lived in the east.

First place among the benevolent spirits was taken by Urun-Ayyy-Toyon ("white lord and creator"), who lived in the eighth heaven, was kind and did not interfere in human affairs, hence there was apparently no cult of him. The image of this spirit was very much mixed up with features of the Christian God. According to a certain belief, still higher than Ayyy-Toyon was Aar-Toyon, who inhabited the ninth heaven. Below them followed a large number of other benevolent deities, who were supposed to bestow various blessings. The most important figure among them
[944] was the female deity *Айииһит* (Ayyysyt), who bestowed fertility, patronized women in labor and gave mothers their children. Sacrifices were made to Ayyysyt during childbirth, and since it was considered that after the birth this goddess remained three days in the house, a special female ritual (to which men were not allowed to come) was performed at the end of three days in order to celebrate her departure.

796 The chief ceremony in honor of the benevolent deities, the patrons of fertility, was the kumys festival, *иһиах*, in the old days. This festival was organized in the spring or halfway through the summer, when there was plenty of milk; it was held in the open air, in the meadows, and many people gathered together for it. The peak moment of the festival

was a ceremonial libation of kumys in honor of the deities, prayers 796
to them, the ceremonial drinking of the kumys from very large wooden
goblets (choroon). After this there was feasting, games of various kinds,
wrestling and so on. The attendants of the benevolent deities, the so-called [756]
ayyy-oyuuna ("white shamans"), were the masters of ceremonies
at the festivities, although they died out among the Yakuts a long time [178]
ago, on account of the decline of this cult. By the end of the 19th century,
there remained only legends of the white shamans.

In the cult of both the benevolent and malevolent deities, a part was 565
played at one stage by the military aristocracy—the toyons; they were
usually the organizers. In their legendary genealogies the toyons often 796
derived their names from the great and powerful deities.

The ancient yeyakh retained elements of the clan cult, and according 614
to legend they had been organized according to clan in former times.
The Yakuts retained other survivals of the clan cult, but these were not 776
very clearly marked. For example, they retained elements of totemism, pointed out in the literature of the 18th century (Stralenberg). Each clan had at one time its own patron in the form of an animal; the clan totems were, for example, ravens, swans, falcons, eagles, squirrels, and so on. The members of a particular clan not only refrained from slaughtering their patrons and eating them as food, but also avoided mentioning them by name.

Associated with the clan cult was the worship of fire, which is still 372
retained by the Yakuts. Fire, according to Yakut superstition, is the
purest element and it was forbidden to defile or dishonor it. Before
each meal was started, pieces of food were thrown into the fire; it was
splashed with milk, kumys and so on. All this was considered a sacrifice
to the master of the fire (Uot-ichchite). There was often not only
a single master, but as many as seven brothers. No images were made
of them. The cult of ancestors among the Yakuts was poorly developed. 769
Among the deceased it was only the shamans and certain outstanding
people whose memory was honored, and whose spirits, for some reason,
were feared.

Folklore

The folklore of the Yakuts was somewhat one-sided, but in certain 53
regions it reached a high artistic level. Apart from the wealth of varied and deeply poetic oral folklore, singing was far less developed and instrumental music hardly existed at all; dancing was fairly poorly developed and monotonous. In the realm of graphic art, the Yakuts only developed the applied forms—finishing and ornamentation of articles in everyday use.

A whole series of different genres and forms stand out among the oral 538
creation of the Yakuts. One of the most interesting is the epic poem—the olonkho.

This is a very ancient type of folk poetry and originated in the clan-tribal age. The language of the olonkho is archaic, and contains a large number of obsolete, almost incomprehensible words and expressions, though it is at the same time rich, colorful and imaginative; the vocabulary of the epic contains almost twice as many words as the everyday language. Consequently, these works are difficult to translate into other languages. The olonkho describes the exploits of mythical warriors (bootur) and their struggles against the evil spirits, the abaasy. There are whole cycles of these poems built round the images

538 of certain favorite heroes (Khan-Dzhargystay, Nyurgun Bootur, Bert-Khara, "The White Boy"); some of these cycles are so long that it takes several days on end to tell them. There were special storytellers called *олонхоһут'и* to recite these poems. A good storyteller was much respected among the people. He had to possess a wonderful memory, since he had to know by heart hundreds of thousands of verses; he had to have a poetic flair and at the same time a good voice and a musical ear, since the poems were partly intoned. The performance of the poems was a subject of special study. It was the custom to be as hospitable as possible to the storyteller, and many people would gather to listen to him. Sometimes the poems would be declaimed by several storytellers together, who to some extent or other dramatized the story, dividing the main roles among themselves; one sang the role of the hero, another the role of his adversary, while the third undertook the [178] narrative part of the poem. The knowledge and narration of these poems was fast declining by the beginning of the 20th century, and there were fewer and fewer good storytellers of this kind; the collective singing of poems died out almost completely.

Alongside the epic poem, there were various historical Yakut legends called *былыргы сэһэннэр* ("Tales of Old Times"), or *өбүгэ сэһэннэрэ* ("Tales of Ancestors"). The themes in them dealt with genuine historical events and their heroes were historical personages; it stands to reason that both types were greatly modified and embellished with legendary motifs; the legends abound in anachronisms and it is impossible to relate them to any definite period without comparison with documentary sources. The latter show that there is usually a grain of truth in the legends. The best known are the stories of the "Yakut tsar" Tygyn (who was in actual fact a Kangalas toyon, living in the 17th century) and his rival Lëgëy (a Borogon toyon of the same period). There is most likely some historical truth as well in the widespread legends of the Yakut progenitors, Omokhoye and Elleye, who sailed by way of the Lena from the south; the legends, incidentally, are mainly to be found among the Yakuts from the Lena-Amga ulusy and are less known on the Vilyuy and in the northern regions.

The Yakut fairytales in verse are also colorful and interesting, particularly those about animals (they are called ostoruya from the Russian word "istoriya" (history), or kepsen. As distinct from the epics, these fairytales are not sung, but narrated; their language is quite different, and is simpler and more down to earth.

539 We should also point out the numerous and highly varied proverbs, sayings (*өс хоһооно*) and riddles (taabryn), which are at times extremely clever and neat. Here are some examples: "There is a silver dish floating in the middle of the sea" (the sun); "in the evening my mother gave birth, in the morning I gave birth to my mother" (freezing and melting of ice); "four children make the bed" (a horse's hooves); "it is said that snow falling on a tree stump does not melt" (gray hair); "two people are fighting with sticks on two sides of a little lake" (eyelids); "Mother roars and the little child runs away" (a gun and a bullet); "it is said that a giant thief stalks underground" (fishing net). Here are some examples of sayings and proverbs: "A hand does not move away from a sore place nor does one take one's eyes from one's beloved"; "a silent person is always regarded as a clever person"; "need whips the vine more painfully"; "the tree will not shake without the wind" (there's no smoke without fire); "a rich man is never satisfied with his own riches"; "this demon is only human in that he eats food" (said of rich people); and many others.

The Yakuts are very fond of eloquence. The ability to make a good 537
speech at a meeting is highly regarded, and the speaker is greeted with cries of approval.

With regard to the songs (yrya), the melodies are simple and mo- 533
notonous, but there are different genres, and the images are often artistic. It is possible to sing love songs (for girls and boys), dance songs, humorous songs, shaman songs, and so on, as well as improvisations, when a person tells in song what he has been doing or seeing. The motif of this kind of song is very simple and usually consists of two or three repeated notes.

The Yakuts did not have any other kind of music, apart from vocal.
There were no musical instruments, leaving aside the shaman tam- [534]
bourine and the khomus, a small iron jew's-harp known to more or less all the peoples of the Old World.

The dances of the Yakuts are very original. Particularly interesting 535
is a round called the *ohyoraü*, performed during festivals.

The dancers stand in a circle arm in arm and in time to the singing move with majestic steps to the left, in the direction of movement of the sun. There were variations of this dance in different localities. There were also various dancing games.

Ornamental art attained a high level of development among the Yakuts. 531
The carving of wood and mammoth ivory; the casting and stamping of 532
silver, copper and gold; the embroidery and appliqué of leather and fabric; fur appliqué and mosaic; the weaving of horsehair: all these were arts performed with materials available to the Yakuts and in which the craftsmen showed particular artistic taste and skill. Basically there was no graphic art for other than decorative purposes among the Yakuts, just as in the folk art of the past as a whole, if we disregard the animal, and human figures made by the shamans, and the later carved sculpture made in imitation of Russian examples.

The style of the Yakut design was original, although it contained 531
Tungus, Mongol and other elements. Geometric motifs predominated, at times rather intricate ones. On the carved wooden vessels we find circular designs consisting of straight, serrated and wavy lines with points, dashes and so on, covering almost the entire surface. In the stamping, casting and birchbark carving, there predominate symmetrical, rounded figures, such as hooks, meanders, pincer-shapes, and so on, with linear squares, concentric circles and so forth. Very typical is a design found on scoops and saddlecloths; here one is struck by the central two-horned lyre—a purely Yakut motif.

The darkening of silver, and the painting of wood and alder with a concoction of alder, were developed.

In the selection of colors, preference was shown for black, red and, to some extent yellow and blue. The same preference was shown in the selection of fabric of the appropriate color.

* * *

Such was the culture of the Yakut people up to the October Revolution. 175

Particularly important was the cultural assistance which the Yakuts
obtained from the fraternal Russian people during the prerevolutionary 177
years. In the 19th century it was mainly the political exiles, beginning
with the Decembrists, who spread culture through Yakutiya. There were 212
also other progressive Russian people who diffused the beginnings of
a cultivated way of life among the Yakuts. In particular, they laid the
foundations of the Yakut written language.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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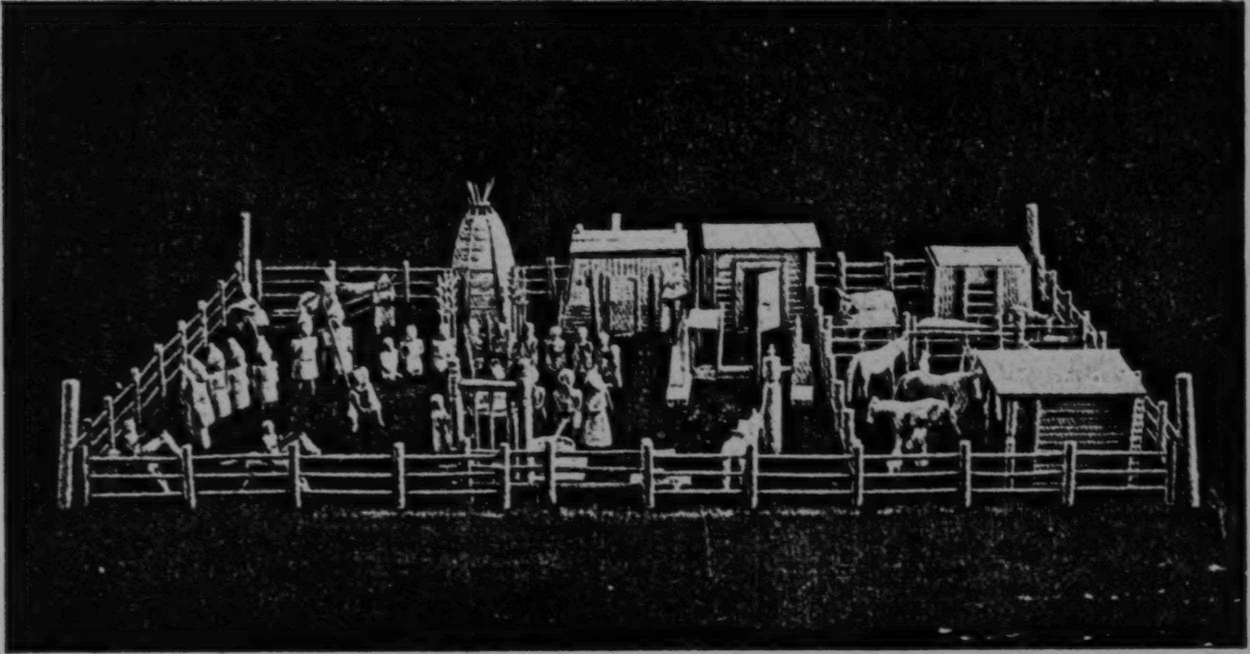
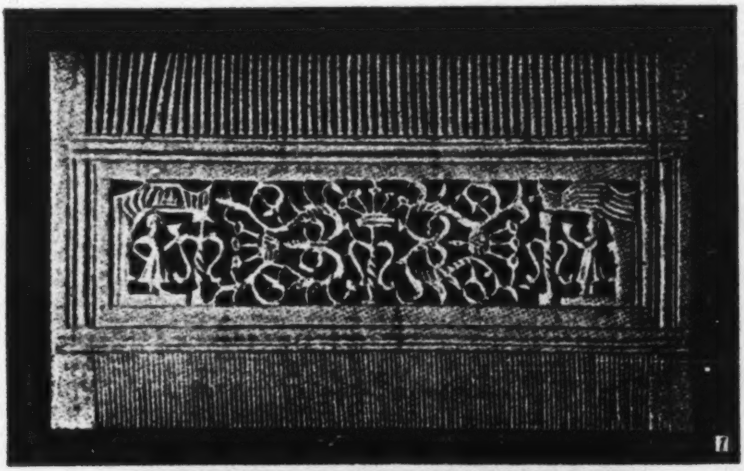


Yakut farmstead. Bone carving, 19th century.



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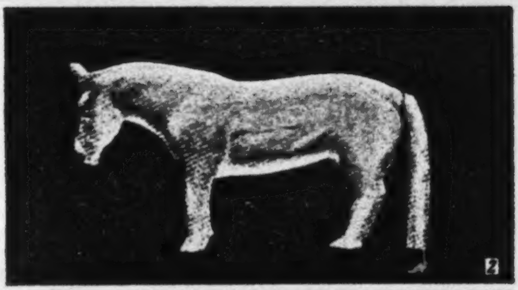

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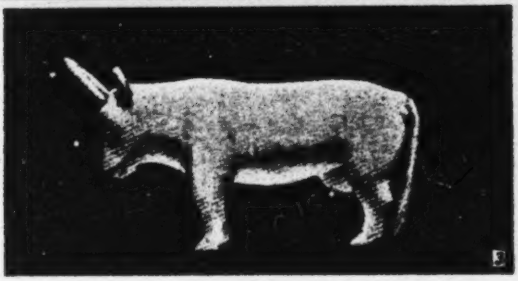

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Bone carving, 19th century. 1—comb; 2—horse; 3—cow.

foundations of the Yakut written language. Uvarovskiy, a Yakut by birth, 600
wrote down several Yakut texts in Russian characters, and on the basis 212
of them Academician O. N. Boethling made the first scholarly analysis
of the Yakut language. At the prompting of the eminent I. Ye. Veniaminov 114
(a former missionary in the Aleutians), the priest Dmitriy Khitrov published in 1958 the first "Brief Grammar of the Yakut Language." A

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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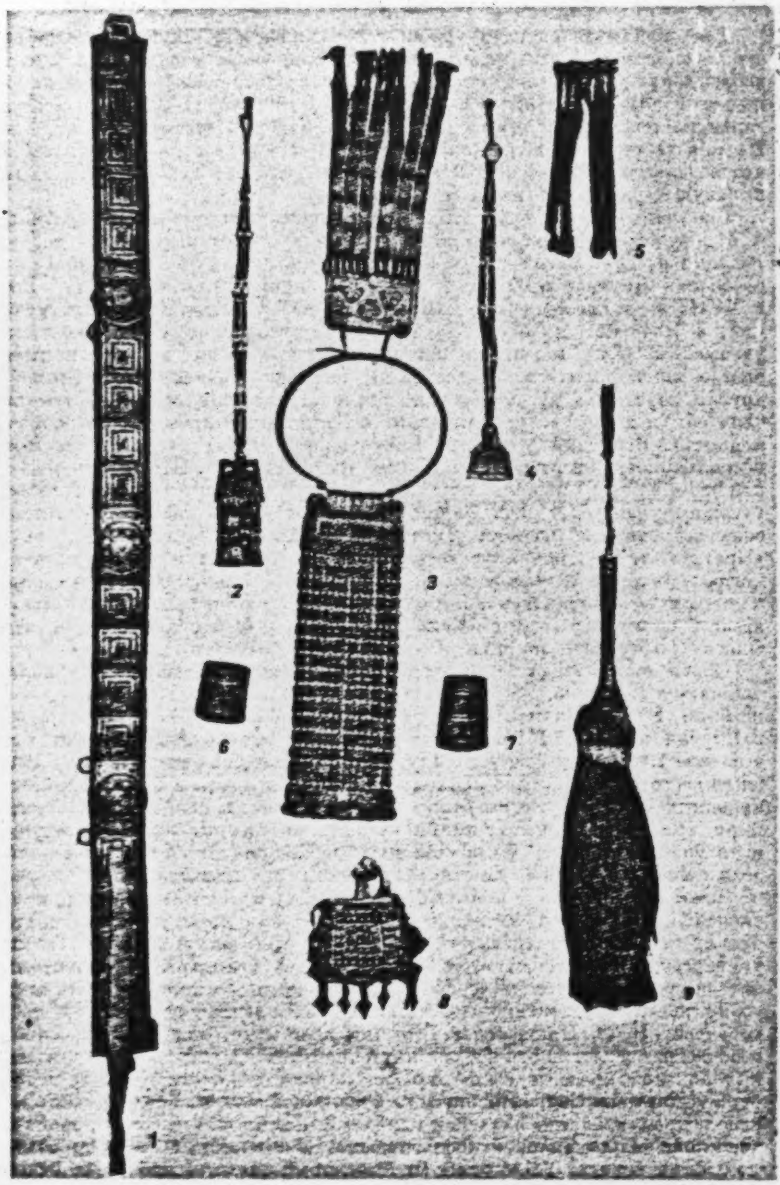

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Silver ornaments: 1—silver belt; 2—embellishments for braids; 3—necklace; 4—women's tinder steel; 5—pendant for braids; 6, 7—bracelets; 8—women's bags; 9—fan.

number of (ecclesiastical) books were published in Yakut. After the 212
1905 revolution, artistic and journalistic literature in Yakut began 114
to appear.

Nevertheless, education remained on a low level among the broad 871
Yakut masses. There were no Yakut national schools. Russian church and state schools began to appear in Yakutiya in the 18th century, but there were very few of them. Even in the early 1900's, there were only 11 rural primary schools in all of Yakutiya, and 57 parish and literacy schools. The masses had little access to these schools, and still less to the secondary schools; there were only 5 of these, and they were located only in cities. Of the Yakuts, it was mainly the children of toyons who could get into them.

Nevertheless, even at the end of the 19th century, a small Yakut 571'
intelligentsia began to appear—teachers, officials, lawyers and doctors,
who had chiefly received education at Tomsk University. From among [814]
this intelligentsia there emerged individual amateurs of local history and folklore—the first Yakut ethnographers and collectors. But by their class affiliation and ideology, these first Yakut intellectuals were inclined to the toyon camp, and were injected with nationalism. Alongside this bourgeois-toyon intelligentsia, there appeared in the last years preceding the October Revolution, under the influence of Social-Democratic and Bolshevist propaganda by political exiles (particularly in the circle led by Yemelyan Yaroslavskiy), a small nucleus of progressive Russian cultural workers.

Socialist Reconstruction

Formation of Yakut ASSR

In Yakutiya, just as throughout the country, the establishment of the 175
Soviet regime involved a fierce struggle against internal and external 648
enemies. In the autumn of 1918 power was seized in Yakutsk by the followers of Kolchak with the help of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries.[6] Hardly had the Yakutsk workers had time to overthrow the counterrevolutionary regime of Kolchak (December 15, 1919) when there flared up, particularly in the autumn of 1921, the kulak and White Guard revolts, led by tsarist officers and Yakut toyons who had been hiding in the remoter areas.

On February 16, 1922, the Presidium of the VTsIK (All-Union Central 175
Executive Committee) adopted a resolution on the formation of the 631
Yakut ASSR. On April 27, 1922, the Presidium, with M. I. Kalinin in the chair, reviewed this question again and decreed as follows: "To form a Yakut Autonomous Soviet Republic as a federal part of the RSFSR with its administrative center in Yakutsk."

In the autumn of 1922 the young Yakut Republic was faced with a 175
serious threat: the American and Japanese imperialists had moved up 648
General Pepelyayev's troops into Yakutya from Manchuria. The General received half a million rubles in gold from the American firm of Olaf Svenson and the British Hudson's Bay Company. The Americans and Japanese equipped Pepelyayev with weapons, ammunition and equipment. Food supplies and weapons were the responsibility of the Japanese

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[6] The Mensheviks were a dissident wing of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDRP), which was also the parent organization of the Communist Party. The Social Revolutionaries (SR's) were moderate agrarian socialists; they participated in the government during the first months after the October Revolution.—Ed.

175 648 firm Arai Gumi. The Yakut people took up arms in defense of their young Republic. In March 1923, with the help of the Red Army units, General Pepelyayev was crushed.

175 631 Even while the struggle against the Pepelyayev bands was still at its height, in December 1922 there was held the first All-Yakut Constituent Assembly of Soviets; this conference elected a Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissars of the YaASSR. In 1923 the Constitution of the YaASSR was adopted at the Third All-Yakut Congress of Soviets. In 1937 a new Yakutiyan Constitution was drafted and on March 9 of the same year it was adopted.

Industry and Transportation

433 During the Five-Year Plans a major socialist industry was developed in Yakutiya. At the present time, in addition to the gold, nonferrous metal and mica industries, there are coal, shipbuilding, building-materials, printing and also fish and dairy industries in Yakutiya.

316 Gold was first mined in the regions bordering on Yakutiya (Vitim and Olekma Basins) more than 100 years ago. But in Yakutiya itself the gold was only mined in very small quantities. In 1923 a prospecting party fitted out by the Yakutiyan government, with the help of Yakut guides, discovered the huge gold deposits on the river Aldan. The Aldan immediately became a major gold-mining area. All around the Aldan there arose settlements, mines, and power stations. At the present time the Aldan mines use powerful electrodredges, conveyors, compressors, excavators and haulage machinery.

[317] The salt reserves of Kempendey along the tributary of the Vilyuy are being exploited on a wide scale.

Extensive prospecting has resulted in the discovery of dozens of new coal deposits. There is now a coal industry in Yakutiya. An example of the rapid development of the coal industry in Yakutiya is the Sangarskiy area. Gold was first mined in Sangary in 1928. During the first year of the mine's existence only 15 tons of coal were brought up, operations being conducted entirely by hand. Nowadays the mine is a large, well-equipped industrial enterprise. A mechanized system for loading the coal onto barges has been installed. [361] The construction of houses and cultural facilities on a large scale has begun in the coal-mining regions. Sangary itself has become a miners' settlement and an industrial corner of Yakutiya.

313 Before the advent of the Soviet regime the very rich forest reserves of Yakutiya were hardly touched. The timber rotted where it stood, or else was destroyed by forest fire. At the present time forestry is a leading branch of the Yakut economy. Advanced Soviet machinery is used on a wide scale at the lumber camps. There are mobile power stations, and electric saws with power units. The forestry organizations have been provided with dozens of hauling tractors and trucks. Fully mechanized sectors have been set up. The timer is floated downriver by means of mechanical traction. Sawmills have been built.

47 178 Hundreds of industrial plants have been set up in Yakutiya during the Soviet period. The manufacture of glass, bricks, building materials, refractory materials, furniture, leatherwares and footwear, provides for local needs.

433 184 In accordance with the planned development of the economy the Yakut region has been divided up into specialized regions—coal mining in the

southern regions, agriculture and the processing industry in the central part, and reindeer-breeding and trapping in the northern regions. 433 184

Particular attention is given in Yakutiya to transportation. The socialist reconstruction of the new Republic began with almost a total lack of roads. The chief means of transportation was always and is still by boat. During the Five-Year Plans the transportation system has undergone a radical reorganization. Whereas in 1917 the entire Lena fleet consisted of 37 outmoded steamers and 113 barges, by the beginning of World War II the Yakut Republic had 127 steamers and more than 500 barges. 489 501

Before the Revolution steamer traffic was restricted basically to the upper and lower regions of the Lena as far as the mouth of the Vilyuy. At the present time steamers sail the whole length of the Lena, Vilyuy, Aldan, Olekma, Amga, Chara, and Maya, and all the other major northern rivers.

The development of the Yakut rivers is directly connected with a very important measure adopted by the Soviet government, namely, the opening up of the Northern Seaway, which through the heroic efforts of polar explorers, sailors and fliers has been turned into a permanently operating route. In the 1920's the Vladivostok-Kolyma routes were reopened. In 1932 the icebreaker Sibiryakov made a historic journey by sailing directly and without a stop from Archangel to Vladivostok. The heroic trip made by the Chelyuskin (1933) proved the navigability of the Northern Seaway for conventional-type steamships. In 1936 there was opened a route along the river Yana, in 1937 the Anabar, and in 1938 the Olekma and the Indigirka. The opening up of the Northern Seaway sharply stepped up the carriage of freight to the northern regions of Yakutiya. 487

The opening up of navigation in northern Yakutiya helped the economic resuscitation of this region. From that time on, the mining and fishing industries began to develop and strengthen. Commodity turnover increased sharply as a result. Coal, timber, salt and food products were delivered to the lower regions of various rivers from Yakutiya. The river routes now being exploited stretch more than 9000 kilometers—almost a quarter of the circumference of the globe.

River traffic has also speeded up. Comfortable double-decker ships of the Volga type run from Osetrovo to Yakutsk, a distance of about 2000 kilometers, in only 5 days.

In 1952 the Lena River Steamship Line acquired new powerful diesel ships of the latest Soviet type.

The Lena River route is now linked to the Siberian Sea artery by a direct railroad line (from Tayshet to Osetrovo docks).

The construction of overland roads has become a matter of nationwide interest in Yakutiya. About 2500 kilometers of permanent highways with winter road camps have been built. The construction and operation of highways have involved tremendous difficulties, such as coping with snowdrifts, ice floes, and ice-covered snow. Of the motor highways linking Yakutiya with the outside world, a particularly important one is the Amur-Yakutsk Highway which connects Aldan, and in winter Yakutsk, with the Ussuriysk railroad. 491

At the present time freight is brought into Yakutiya by four different routes: The Upper Lena wharves (Kachug, Zhigalovo), the Osetrovo wharf, the Amur-Yakutsk Highway, and the Northern Seaway. 487

Aviation routes connect Yakutsk with Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk and Moscow. The local lines in operation are Yakutsk-Aldan, Yakutsk-Bulun-Tiksi, etc.

The centuries-old isolation of this region from the chief centers of the country is now a thing of the past. Extensive development has also 177 206 207

177 taken place in such forms of communication as radio, telegraph and telephone.
206 Compared with 1940 the number of radio points in 1952 was more
207 than doubled. By this time communication had been established between Yakutsk and rural localities and machine-tractor stations, and 225 nasleg soviets had been linked by telephone. Many rayons and nasleg soviets are now equipped with radios.

205 The extent of the postal routes is 65,000 kilometers, practically twice the length of the equator.

Towns and Cities

633 The capital of the Yakut ASSR is the city of Yakutsk, which used to be the oblast center. Here are concentrated the most important Yakut Republic offices, ministries, banks, scientific institutes, and higher and secondary schools. During the Soviet period Yakutsk has been turned into a major
[365] industrial center. The water system laid in Yakutsk has the deepest water-intake point in the world. The problem of obtaining subsoil water for this water system was an extremely difficult one because of the permafrost. Engineers worked hard to solve this problem even before the Revolution, though never successfully. Soviet technicians and working people have solved it. Subpermafrost water is now fed into the main water supply. Stone bathhouses, mechanized laundries, barbershops and other such enterprises for the personal use of the population did not come into being until the Soviet regime. The streets of the city are paved with wood blocks and sidewalks have been constructed. Yakutsk is rapidly developing.

Over the last few years Yakutsk has been changing from wooden buildings to brick and sometimes reinforced concrete buildings. Bus routes between the city and neighboring regions are now in operation.

871 In Yakutsk there are 22 secondary, seven-year and primary schools.
368 They are attended by about 9000 children. In the city there are 16 tekhnikums, various courses, and a pedagogical institute, a Yakut Theatre of Music and Drama, a Russian drama theatre, two movie houses and seven clubs. The Pushkin Science Library, the Yaroslavskiy Yakutsk Regional Museum and the Yakutsk Museum of Fine Arts are great favorites with the citizens.

743 There are hospitals in the city and it is also there that the research institutes and laboratories are to be found. In 1947 a research base of the
744 USSR Academy of Sciences was opened there, and in 1949 it was turned into the Yakutsk branch of the Academy. In the same year there was opened a Yakutsk branch of the Tuberculosis Institute of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

Agriculture

241 In pre-Revolutionary Yakutiya the poor and middle peasant families
233 totaled more than 80 percent of all households. One-seventh of all the households were entirely without sowings, and many were only able to sow
565 a few hundredths of a hectare each. Most of the households (97 percent) had to do without factory-made agricultural implements. Stockbreeding produced extremely poor results. The owners of large areas of land and abundant livestock i.e.,—the kulaks and toyons, grew rich, but not so much by raising the level of land cultivation and animal husbandry as by exploiting the poor and middle peasants.

During the first two years of the Soviet regime the situation hardly 423
changed for the better. There was redistribution of the land in 1923-24, 565
but the reform only partly cut down the amount of land used by the toyons and virtually made no difference to the burdensome state of the poor people. For example, the nonrepartitional land expropriated by the toyons on the basis of their "clearing right" was left in their possession. It was only the second land reform of 1929 that put an end to toyon coercion and created a situation in which the agriculture of Yakutiya could be improved. About 150,000 hectares of the best land, formerly owned by the toyons and kulaks, then passed into the hands of the working peasantry.

A collective-farm movement among the Yakut workers began in about 474
1930. In 1929 only 3.6 percent of the households were collectivized; by 1932 241
the figure was 41.7 percent, and by 1947 collective farms united 98.7 percent of all the households in the Yakut Republic. Collectivization gave a powerful impetus to the development of land cultivation, which prior to the Revolution had only advanced at a snail's pace. The sown area in Yakutiya had increased to 92,000 hectares by 1946, as opposed to 37,000 in 1917. Machine-tractor stations provide great assistance to the collective farms. Several hundred tractors, many combines and trucks are now at work in the fields. More than 20,000 agricultural machines are in operation. Trained teams of Yakut tractor-drivers, combine-operators, drivers and
mechanics have begun to appear. Great advances have been made in the 242
field of agricultural techniques. Particular attention has been given to retention of the moisture in the soil. The climate and soil conditions of Yakutiya make agriculture particularly difficult. In addition to the frequent droughts and spring frosts, some of the lakes dry up and deprive whole settlements of water. Over the last few years the Yakut collective farms have worked very hard to organize irrigation and flooding.

Many farms use water wheels and pumps to water their gardens. In 1952, more than 300,000 hectares of land, chiefly green meadows and pastureland, were irrigated by means of both permanent and temporary installations. The first specialized meadow-reclamation station had been set up in the Gorniy Rayon.

In 1952, M. G. Yegorov, member of the New Life collective farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon, was awarded a Stalin Prize for the introduction of more modern methods in vegetable-growing on Yakutiyan collective farms. In the rigorous Yakutiyan climate Yegorov had been gathering 300-350 tsentners of cabbage, 180-190 tsentners of cucumbers, 170 tsentners of carrots, and 130 tsentners of tomatoes each year per hectare. In 1956 he was awarded the Order of Lenin.

Nevertheless, animal husbandry is still the chief branch of agriculture 233
in Yakutiya. Poorly productive livestock was a legacy received by the collective farms from the past. The milk yield per cow averaged only 600 kilograms of milk per year. The Yakut farmers struggled hard for complete reorganization of their animal husbandry. The productivity of the cattle was improved throughout the Republic by crossbreeding. Techniques for the maintenance and pasturing of cattle were radically changed. Many standardized cattle-yards of an improved design were built. The work of the milkmaid was mechanized on many collective farms. On account of the extensive clearing of meadowland, the farms are in a position at the present time to provide their cattle with coarse fodder, although they still do not have enough concentrates.

An important part has been played in the development of animal hus- 232
bandry by veterinary-zootechnical work. The rate of malignant anthrax among cattle has been reduced to nil. Precautionary measures in this

232 field have been of tremendous benefit. Many hundreds of specialists are now at work in the field of agriculture and among them there are quite a few veterinary surgeons and technicians with higher education. Horse-breeding is also being successfully developed.

434 The income received by collective-farm members is an indication of
the considerable progress made in the collective-farm system. For
474 example, in 1955 the Yershov family from the Red Partisan collective
farm in the Churapchinskiy Rayon, consisting of four members, completed
22,500 labor units[7] and in the final accounting received 100 poods of grain,
48 poods of meat, 69 poods of oil, more than 30 poods of vegetables, 2 foals
and more than 5500 rubles in cash.

For each labor unit completed at the Red Star collective farm in the Aldanskiy Rayon in 1955 the farmer received a payment of 32 rubles and 50 kopeks.

High incomes are also received by cattle breeders in the northern regions. On the Victory collective farm in the Olenekskiy Rayon, 808,000 rubles were spent in payment for labor units in 1954. For each labor unit the payment was 16 rubles in cash and 210 grams of meat; each household received an average income in cash of 11,400 rubles.

Trapping, Fur-Farming and Fishing

224 There are 22 species of fur-bearing animals in the Yakut ASSR. Trap-
ping is one of the main occupations of the population of northern Yakutiya.
On account of the indiscriminate extermination of the reserves of fur in
Yakutiya many species of animals such as the otter, sable, and dark-brown
[656 fox had almost entirely disappeared by 1917. The Revolution put an end to
the extermination of these fur-bearing animals. It also did away with the
centuries-old enslavement of the hunting and trapping population in debts by
commercial capital. One of the first steps taken by the Soviet authorities
was to annul the debts to merchants on the part of the hunters and to pro-
[426] hibit the private buying up and resale of furs. Hunting seasons were intro-
duced and the hunting of declining species of fur-bearing animals was
prohibited or restricted. The reconstruction of hunting led to Yakutiya's
becoming one of the chief suppliers of furs. Over the last few years the
Republic has provided 20-25 percent of the All-Union output of furs. An
474 important part in development of planned hunting has been played by the
224 hunting-trapping stations (POS) set up from 1931 to 1933. These stations
instructed hunters and trappers in new techniques of hunting and fitted
them out with the necessary equipment. The chief hunting weapon is the
small-caliber rifle and carbine. Use is made of imported traps and local
self-trapping devices. Use is made of improved self-operating devices
which prevent the pelts' being damaged, for example, the "trough-fall."
The collective farms equip hunters with means of transportation, tents,
stoves, and ammunition. The weapons are usually the hunters' personal
property. The advanced trappers in the polar-fox regions have at their
disposal 200-300 traps each and 100-150 springtraps of improved design.
Many squirrel-hunters have from 400 to 500 fall-snares. During the

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465 [7] The labor unit (trudoden') is the standard of unit of payment on collective farms. It is set at a fixed rate in cash and produce for each farm but may vary from year to year. Different jobs are rated differently as to number of labor units for an actual day's work.—Ed.

474 224 trapping season brigades of hunters are equipped with food and ammunition while actually in the field. Traveling agents from the Rural Consumers' Society take the hunters everything they need in the hunting grounds and collect the pelts from them on the spot.

Over the last 20 years a great deal of work has been done to supplement the animals hunted and trapped in the Yakut ASSR. Between 1930 and 1932, 118 specimens of the muskrat, a valuable animal, were brought into the Tokkinskiy Rayon of Yakutiya. It is now found in 32 rayons and has even become acclimatized beyond the Arctic Circle. Over the last few years muskrat shooting has been begun on a systematic basis.

Steps have been taken to replace the reserve of sable. At the present time more than 600 Barguzina sables have been let loose in the forests of Yakutiya. In many parts of the tundra the polar fox is supplied with additional fodder. In the summer, trappers and trapping industry experts carry out careful observation of the conifer harvest and the migration of fur-bearing animals so as to be able to give collective farms an indication of which particular type of hunting they should engage in. The farms make certain that their traps are closed for the summer to prevent needless loss of animals.

224 [433] In Yakutiya there is also hunting for wild reindeer, elk, wildfowl and waterfowl as a source of food. Hunting is the most profitable commercial branch of the economy in the northern regions. From year to year the material standard of the collective-farm members is increasing, and the high income received from hunting and trapping enables the farmers of the North to supply themselves with food, factory-made clothing and footwear, and, in addition, to acquire commodities of everyday and personal use. Women hunters and trappers have begun appearing in Yakutiya, which is an innovation.

233 232 474 At the present time furs are not only obtained by trapping. Within the Yakut socialist economy, just as in the other regions of the Soviet North, a new branch of economy has sprung up—the breeding of fur-bearing animals in captivity (and, clearly, the most valuable ones). This experiment was begun in the Republic in 1936. Silver-fox farms were set up in Kitcha and Pokrovskoye. In 1956 there were 8 cooperative and 167 collective fur-farms specializing in silver fox in Yakutiya. Hundreds of pedigreed forest animals are kept on the cooperative farms.

228 The Yakut fish industry began to develop in the 1920's. The Tusbalyk ("salt fish" in the Yakut language) Trust was set up in 1928. During World War II the Yakutgosrybtrest (Yakut State Fish Trust) was set up, combining all the fisheries. Seines, 500-700 meters long, hauled by tractors, appeared at the fisheries. Around-the-year fishing was organized on the lower reaches of the Lena and Yana. A large quantity of fish is procured by the population for personal use. The northern fisheries supplement their equipment during the year by acquiring new seines and barrels and add new ships to their fleets. At the mass-scale fisheries the needs of the workers are provided for by cultural stations. The income of the collective fishermen is increasing. Although local methods of fishing (by boat, by barricading rivers, etc.) are still used, they are becoming more and more amateur methods and are being replaced by modern mechanized techniques.

Collective Farms

474 Typical examples of the Yakut collective farm are the enlarged Stalin collective farm in the Ordzhonikidzevskiy Rayon of the Kachikatskiy Nasleg

474 and the Stalin farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon. The first of these
[621] barely numbered 10 households in the 30's when first organized, but now
unites 265 individual households. This collective farm has many different
[433] branches. It has 1200 hectares of ploughland, 3000 hectares of meadowland,
2700 hectares of pastureland, and upward of 3000 head of livestock.
The collective farm has seven subsidiary farms for dairy-farming, horse-breeding,
reindeer-breeding, poultry and pigs. Since 1953, fox and rabbit
have been reared on it. The farm has two power stations. The electricity
[377] is used for purposes of illumination, threshing and cleaning the seed,
grinding grain and sawing wood. An electric milking system for the cows
[234] is being introduced.

Well-designed houses, schools and hospitals have been constructed in
474 the collective-farm settlement. It has its own club, library and radio-relay
station. A park has been made near the settlement, and there is also
368 a stadium. Films are shown regularly and amateur concerts are often
organized.

The Stalin collective farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon became
474 the largest collective farm in the Republic as soon as the neighboring
311 collectives merged with it. By government decree, it is the possessor of
67,000 hectares of land, of which 2798 hectares are ploughland, and almost
433 11,000 constitute meadowland and pastures. The remaining land is taken
up by forests. The collective farm sows almost 800 hectares of wheat, 720
hectares of spring and winter rye, more than 250 hectares of oats and
bareley, and 55 hectares of vegetables and potatoes. In 1955 there were
about 3500 head of cattle on the farm, more than 1200 horses, 250 reindeer,
and more than 100 pigs; furthermore, the collective farm has a subsidiary
poultry farm and a section for breeding fur-bearing animals.

474 At the present time the collective farm has three small power stations
with a total output of 125 kilowatts. The electricity is used for threshing
[377] grain, driving a sawmill and operating lathes. In view of the increased
[246] generation of electricity the farm has mechanized the delivery of fodder
to the byres. There are more than 500 different types of machines, 6 trucks,
2 passenger cars and 12 engines on the farm.

[434] In 1955, the farm's income was 2,700,000 rubles. The material status
of the farmers has been considerably improved.

At the same time their cultural standards have increased.

[212] There is not one single illiterate person on the farm: 120 farmers have
a secondary education or higher, 10 of them are studying at universities
[871] and 165 in tekhnikums and secondary schools. Many of the collective-farm
members return to their own farms after receiving their education.

Great progress has been attained by the northern farms of the Nizhne-Kolymskiy,
[233] Bulunskiy, Olenekskiy, Anabarskiy and other rayons. Their
[224] achievements are due to the overall reorganization of reindeer-breeding
and the trapping industry. On many of the farms there are Yakuts, Evenks,
[563] Chukchi and other minorities all working together.

Socialization of the reindeer and the creation of large herds has made it
474 possible to introduce such veterinary measures as stage-by-stage nomadizing
based on the rotation of pastureland, inoculations, and day and night
232 guarding of the herds. In the past Yakutiyan reindeer-herders never made
233 use of dogs, which, for example, among the Nentsy make the work of the
herdsmen easier. Nowadays reindeer-herding dogs are used extensively
in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy, Allaikhovskiy and Bulunskiy Rayons.

474 The northern collective farms have not confined themselves to the traditional
433 branches of economy, namely, reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing,
and are courageously developing new branches. On most of the
233

474 433 233 reindeer-breeding collective farms there are now dairy and horse-breeding sections.

474 434 The Stalin Even-Yakut collective farm in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy Rayon (formerly known as the Sutanya-Udёran) is successfully developing reindeer-breeding alongside horse-breeding, fishing and hunting. The collective contains more than 17,000 reindeer. In 1955 more than 850 tsentners of such important species of fish as whitefish and baranatka were caught. In 1955, 215,000 rubles worth of furs were delivered to the State. The gross monetary income of this collective farm was 2,430,000 rubles; 1,423,000 rubles were distributed to the collective-farm members for labor units, and for each labor unit the payment was 17 rubles cash, 1.04 kg of meat and 720 g of fish. The monetary income per household averaged 24,000 rubles.

361 474 Despite the fact that the chief branches of industry of the northern farms have required periodic migration on the part of the population, all the farms have constructed settlements or collective-farm centers. As an example we can take the settlement of Kolymskaya, the center of the Turvaurgin collective farm. This center contains the headquarters of the farm administration, an incomplete secondary school with boarding facilities, a hospital, a shop, a house of culture with a library, a trading station, a power station, bathhouses, a dairy farm, and 50 standard farmhouses. The farm recently acquired an S30 tractor, a launch and two motorboats. [563] In ethnic composition the Turvaurgin collective farm is multinational and consists of Chukchi, Yukagirs, Yakuts and Evenks.

New Way of Life

361 A considerable obstacle in the way of the implementation of cultural and public-health program in Yakutiya between 1920 and 1930 was the scattered nature of Yakut settlements due to the ancient occupation of pastoralism. One, two or three yurts together was the predominant type of "settlement." The combining of them into larger units was further required by the everyday farming needs of collective farms.

[207] The construction of settlements under Yakutiyan conditions was a major achievement in socialist reconstruction of the Yakutiyan countryside. It provided an opportunity for installing radio and telephone on the farms and providing them with medical and cultural-educational institutions. In 1950 the construction of settlements in southern Yakutiya was by and large complete. The farm settlements are usually located on elevated riverbanks or by the shores of lakes and consist of several parallel streets. Generally speaking, timber houses rather than yurts are built in these settlements. The center is reserved for the school, collective-farm administrative offices, medical center and club. On many farms yurts are used as work premises. [377] There are quite a few settlements with power stations. In the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon alone there are 14 farm power stations with a [207] total output of more than 510 kilowatts. Radio-relay systems have been installed in many of the new settlements. The farmers live in the settlements when they are not out working.

342 354 Although several types of farmhouses have been developed, they are still far from perfect. The rigorous climate makes particular demands upon the housing construction in Yakutiya. Special forms of heating are used in the new houses, such as triple frames—the first frame is a single one, while the second is inserted during the winter and has two panes of

342 glass, tambours (extra doors with an air lock in between) and zavalinkas
(mounds of earth around the house). A common practice is to ice over the
354 house for the winter with a mixture of snow and water. Double ceilings,
double floors, horizontal flues and shutters are still used, although rather
rarely. The brick or tile stove is sometimes combined with the traditional
Yakut fireplace. In many houses there is an extra iron stove in addition
to the brick stove.

35 The internal appearance of dwellings has also changed. The furniture
known before to the Yakuts (tables, stools and benches) has become less
massive and more varied. We now find bookshelves, chairs, small dressing-tables
and mirrors. Factory-made crockery and utensils are encountered
in every home. Clocks (including alarm clocks), writing materials,
and books have become common, and phonographs are also sometimes
found. In most houses the walls are adorned with posters, pictures of Communist
Party leaders, photographs, bookshelves, and over the bed there is
usually a rug made of skin from the reindeer's head, bead-embroidered
saddlecloths, or else the walls are covered with cloth. The windows have
177 curtains.

[377] Tremendous changes have taken place in the way of life of the Yakuts.
Many collective farms now have electricity and radio. Clean clothes,
[207] hot baths, and attention to their personal appearance are typical of most of
the collective-farm members. There has been a change in interests, habits
[515] and way of life. The outlook of the population has broadened. Books can
[54] now be found in every house. In the settlements people enjoy movies, and
attend lectures and discussions in the reading rooms. Young people take
part in ski-races, chess and other sporting events. Amateur song and dance
groups in the clubs are usually of interest to the whole settlement. The
families are no longer isolated and no longer keep to themselves.

524 A typical innovation for city children is toys, such as figures of horses
and cows, rubber dolls, rattles, clockwork trucks, and so on. In addition to
these, we commonly find delicately carved wooden animals and tiny bows
and arrows. In the schools and boarding facilities children amuse themselves
with the most popular table games. In the spring and summer they
play various games, including hide-and-seek and blind man's-buff.

262 A great deal has changed in the Yakut diet, as well.

It should be remembered that before the Revolution Yakutiya was a country
of chronic famine. Most of the Yakut population suffered from starvation
every year, particularly at the end of the winter and in spring. Bread
has now become a normal food not only in the southern but also in the northern
areas. Groats and macaroni are now part of the staple diet. The consumption
of vegetables and potatoes has also considerably increased.

242 In many regions the collective farms grow cucumbers, radishes, cabbages,
onions and beets. Vegetables are imported in the dehydrated form.
443 Everywhere the population is amply provided with tea, sugar, and tobacco.
There are bakeries at trading points in most settlements. Meat and fish
262 are consumed by the Yakuts in large quantities, particularly in the northern
regions, where they are the staple diet. In the southern regions an important
262 part of the diet is dairy products. On account of the overall improvement
177 in the living standards of the people, sapwood is no longer consumed
178 as food. Nor do they eat pickled fish any more. Local traditions are still
retained in the cooking of dairy products, meat and fish. In the northern
regions meat is commonly undercooked. Milk is made into some curious
dishes such as suorat, khayakh, chokhoon, көбүөр and so forth. In a number
of regions reindeer gristle is still eaten in the raw state as a delicacy, and
so are the liver and bone marrow of this animal. Many families eat freshly

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

Many families eat freshly frozen fish in the winter. In some parts in the North fish is made into yukola. The fish is slightly smoked over a fire and then dried in the sun; it is also customary to salt and smoke fish. In the central regions people catch large numbers of hares, and partridge, geese and duck serve as a subsidiary part of the diet of the people in the north. 262

At the present time the outer fur clothing of the Yakuts (short coat, fur trousers, and kneepieces) is only retained for working. In the winter it is common to wear padded coats and trousers in the settlements. Throughout Yakutiya the local style of winter footwear made from reindeer skin (eterbes) and fur stockings (keenche) have been retained. These are also worn by travelers visiting these regions. Felt boots are worn in the settlements and towns in the winter. 291

The soft summer boots have not been replaced by factory-made footwear either. In the settlements people wear knee-boots, ankle-boots and shoes. For fishing use is made of rubber knee-boots. For hunting during summer in the taiga, preference is given to ichigi.

Whereas the high-pointed hats have fallen into disuse and are not made any more, the bonnet-type hat covered on top with cloth and trimmed inside with fur is still used, chiefly in most northern regions. At the present time hats with flaps with the fur outside are often made. The shawl made of squirrel-tails is rarely found and has been replaced by the normal type of scarf. Wide-brimmed summer hats made of horsehair have also fallen into disuse.

In the towns and villages men's and women's clothes are close in style to modern urban apparel. Cloth clothing has ousted suede shirts throughout. It has become customary to wear underclothing and use bed linen. Prior to the Revolution many Yakuts never washed their clothes, supposing that it would help to make them last longer. Underwear is now regularly washed.

Position of Women

The position of women in Yakutiya can be said to have radically changed. 562
In Yakut families women used to occupy an inferior position (with fewer rights than among many other of the Siberian peoples) and took no part in public life.

M. D. Nartakhova, the daughter of a poor Yakut, has become a prominent figure in Yakutiya. She was educated at the Irkutsk Workers' University, after which she became a teacher, then worked as a political affairs instructor for the Central Executive Committee of the Yakut Republic, a Rayon Soviet chairman, an Obkom Party instructor, Rayon Committee Secretary of the Communist Party and since 1947 has been Social Security Minister for the Yakut ASSR. At the present time Comrade Nartakhova is chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Yakut ASSR. 562 159

In 1952, 44 women were elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Yakut ASSR and 3 women were made deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and RSFSR, while more than 2000 women (34.5 percent of all those elected) were members of the local soviets. Yakut women at the present time, occupy a great variety of posts. They are to be found as chairmen of the collective-farm administrations, chairmen of the nasleg soviets, and in administrative posts in the Communist Party and Komsomol. Many Yakut women have become teachers, doctors, nurses, and cultural officials. 1756 women work in education, 500 are doctors and 24 are scientists. In 562

562 1949, 55 women were working as rural soviet chairmen. About 500 girls from Yakutiya are studying at different universities in the country. In the northern regions there were once hunters who used not even to mention the word "hunting" in front of women because of superstitious belief, but now there are even women hunters; the present figure is as many as 1000 women hunters and fishers. Many of them have gained the title of "advanced hunter."

Education

871 During the tsarist regime hardly any Yakuts were literate.[8] As soon as the Soviet regime had been consolidated, school construction was developed on a wide scale, as shown by the following table:

Schools	1917	1948
Primary	164	424
7-year	5	149
Secondary	4	30
Total	173	603

In 1917 there were 4660 children at school, but by 1948 the number was 62,942.

In the 1951-1952 academic year there were more than 600 schools functioning in the Yakut Republic, attended by about 66,000 pupils. In the 1955-56
academic year there were 20,000 pupils living in dormitories. When
Yakutiya received its autonomy by a decision of the Council of Ministers of
the Yakut ASSR, instruction in primary schools was changed to the Yakut
language. This made it easier for Yakut schoolchildren to master their
[191] subjects. From 1933 on, the teaching of all subjects in the 5th to 7th classes
was switched to the Yakut language.

The teaching of main subjects in schools in the vernacular not only
19 helped the pupils to acquire knowledge, but also furthered the rapid development
212 of the Yakut language and the solution of problems of terminology
and orthography. From 1933 to 1947, about 400 book titles were published in
the Yakut language in overall editions of several million copies.

Three teacher's schools and one pedagogical institute turn out trained
874 teachers for the Yakut Republic. In 1955 there were more than 4500 teachers,
[875] which was 15 times more than in 1917. The 17 tekhnikums and special
secondary schools are attended by more than 3000 students. These academic establishments train teachers, agronomists, ship mechanics, lawyers, technicians, etc. A 2-year Communist Party School has been opened in Yakutsk and a Marxist-Leninist University. More than 1000 Yakuts are studying at universities of Moscow, Leningrad and Irkutsk.

Yakutiya has also trained its own scientific personnel. About 70 scientists have the degree of Candidate in Science in the fields of history, pedagogy, philology, agriculture, and other subjects. There are also doctors of science.

212 In 1942 Yakutiya celebrated the end of illiteracy among the adult population. Over the years of the Soviet regime more than 155,000 illiterate

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[8] This conflicts with other data indicating the existence of a pre-Revolutionary Yakut intelligentsia of some dimensions and influence.—Ed.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964

RV2 Yakut RV2

[p. 299]

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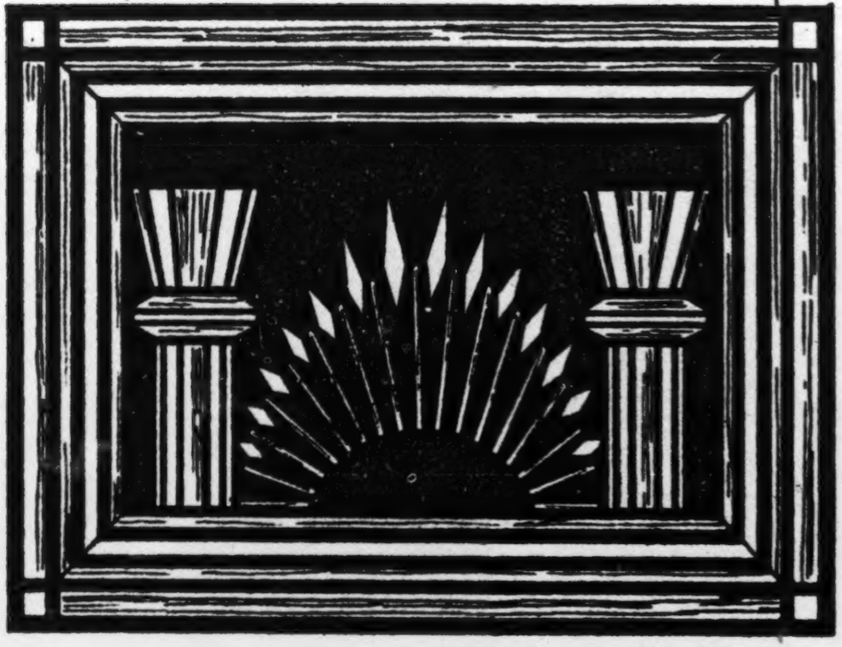

Appliqué made from straw and colored paper on lid of wooden box.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

[p.300]

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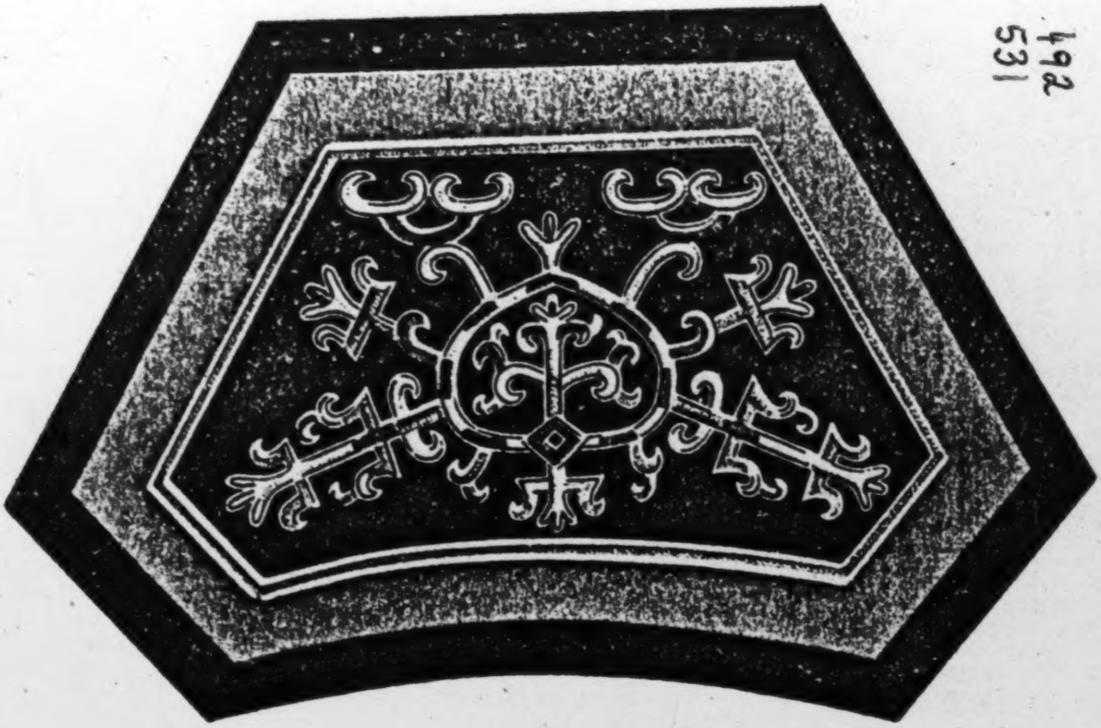

Saddlecloth embroidered with colored thread.

people have been taught to read and write. Work continues with those who 212
are only partially literate in the network of adult schools.

In 1917 there were only two clubs, three small libraries and one 217
museum in Yakutiya. In 1951 the Republic had more than 1000 educational- 178
cultural establishments, among which there were about 500 reading rooms,
several hundred libraries and 5 museums. At the present time there are 871
Party schools in all rayons. In 1948, 986 amateur music and entertainment
groups were functioning in the various clubs. There are regular amateur
art exhibitions in the clubs and houses of culture. In the north, e.g., the
Anabarskiy, Olenekskiy and other rayons,—Red tents with mobile film units
have been set up for the population of the tundra.

Public Health

Planned medical assistance was not provided for the population of 743
Yakutiya until the coming of the Soviet regime. By 1927 there were 37
hospitals, 50 medical-assistant points with 627 beds, and 20 outpatient
clinics in the Republic. Over the years of the Five-Year Plans the medical
network has been greatly increased. There are now more than 630 medical
establishments in the Republic, which employ 500 doctors and more than
2500 personnel with intermediate medical training.

An important health center has been created in Yakutsk. The Republic 743
hospital with 500 beds consists of several large standard blocks. It is 744
fitted out with the latest medical equipment. There are also a number of
specialized hospitals in Yakutiya. The 33 epidemiological stations and
bacteriological laboratories are working hard; more than 500 clinical
laboratories have been set up. Vaccination against measles, tularemia,
etc. is carried out at a number of laboratories. Since 1940 medical
assistance has been given to the population of the most remote parts of
the Republic by aircraft. Flying surgeons performed 183 operations in the
year 1951 alone.

The Yakuts have made great progress in safeguarding pregnant mothers 743
and infants. In 1924 the first obstetric consultation office in the Republic 843
was opened. In 1940 there were 9 state-owned maternity homes, 37 844
collective farm maternity homes and 37 permanent nurseries in service.
In 1952 the number of nurseries had been raised to 82, with accommodation
for 2644 children.

Particular attention has been given by the Yakut government to the 744
campaign against a legacy of the past, i.e., such social diseases as tuberculosis and trachoma. A wide network of medical and disease-prevention
establishments has been set up. Every man, woman and child undergoes
tests for tuberculosis, and practically all the regional hospitals are equipped
with X-ray apparatus. Antitubercular inoculation is normal practice.

In 1924 a special brigade was sent to Yakutiya from the center to make [164]
a study of different parts of the Yakut ASSR on the prevalence of trachoma.
In 1945 the first trachoma clinic was opened. The incidence of trachoma has
sharply declined as a result of tremendous work in preventive medicine and
hygiene education; blindness due to trachoma has been reduced to nil. In
many places there have been set up interrayon centers where specialized
medical aid can be obtained. There are two mudbath resorts in Yakutiya.

The number of medical officials has sharply increased. In 1952, as 759
compared with 1922, the number of doctors had increased by a factor of 30,
while there were 26 times more personnel with intermediate medical
training.

The Press

204 [214] The printing of books in Yakutiya followed the decision of the Yakut government to introduce the Yakut language into schools in 1922. The next year a Yakut-language paper, Kyym (The Spark), began to come out and was later made into the oblast daily paper.

At the present time 25 regional newspapers are published in the Republic, of which 17 are in the vernacular.

214 The State Yakut Publishing House was set up in 1926. In its 25 years of activity it has published 2735 different books. The total number of copies amounts to more than 14,000,000.

Scientific Research

815 A tremendous amount of research work has been carried out in Yakutiya during the Soviet period. The USSR Academy of Sciences and a number of ministries concerned with industry have taken part in studying the natural resources of the country.

814 At the present time there are in Yakutiya 12 research establishments and a Pedagogical Institute which also conducts research. A tremendous amount of work has been done in the field of the hydrometeorological study of the Yakut ASSR, study of the permafrost and the fish and fur resources, agrotechnology under Yakutiyan conditions and so on. Extensive work has been carried out in the field of the arts as well. The Research Institute for Language, Literature and History of the Yakut ASSR was opened in 1935 and has continued the work of the local studies association. During the last war the institute switched from collecting research material to conducting major studies in Yakut history, folklore and language. The Yakut branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, part of which is the Language, Literature and History Institute, has a well-stocked collection of folklore, numbering about 10,000 texts. A great deal of work in collecting material on folk music has been done under the guidance of the first Yakut composer, the late M. N. Zhirkov. For a number of years Professor A. P. Okladnikov has been engaged in a systematic study of Yakut archaeology. The results of this study are summed up in the first volume of "The History of Yakutiya".

Folk Singers and Storytellers in Soviet Yakutiya

538 Following the Socialist Revolution, profound changes occurred in the oral folklore of the Yakut people. Many genres of the traditional folklore, such as shaman spells and chants, fell into disuse, while others continued on in a completely different form (singing at the ysyakh-kumys festival.) The heroic tales—olonkho—have remained the favorite form of oral folklore; they are frequently sung on the radio and at club concerts, and are included in other performances. The talented narrators of these epics, or olonkhosuts, are very popular among Soviet audiences. Many of them are members of the Union of Soviet Writers. There are now more than 400 such storytellers on the registers.

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Dance of girls with chorons (kumys pitchers). Amateur performance at collective farm.

Theatre

545 During the time of the Soviet regime a Yakut national art with new forms
completely unknown in Yakutiya in the pre-Revolutionary period has blossomed.
Before the Revolution Yakuts did not know about the theatre, and
music and singing were only found in their most primitive form. In 1925
members of the drama group attached to the People's Russian Theatre in
Yakutsk was formed into the Yakut National Troupe, and in 1930 a Yakut
[536] National Theatre Studio was set up. From the very first years of its
existence the actors set themselves the task of a realistic portrayal of
Yakut life, denunciation of the merchants and toyons, and demonstration
of the greatness of the Socialist Revolution. The theatre gradually attracted
[874] young Yakut actors and actresses who had graduated from the
Central Theatre School and Studios. They performed works by Soviet-Yakut
dramatists with great success.

Art

532 For centuries Yakutiya has been known for its applied ornamental art, but professional artists only began to appear in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Bone-carving is the ancient art of the Yakuts. Bone-carving, woodcutting and embossing silver still exist at the present time. Bone is widely used for bas-relief portraits. 532 321

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

[p. 904]

The Yakuts

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116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

Literary texts 539

[184] REINDEER BREEDING AMONG THE DOLGAN

1.

233 The domestic reindeer (Cervus tarantus), which plays a prominent role in the life of the Dolgan, is found in three types according to them: the Tavgi--saamajdii, the Tungus--tonustii, and the Dolgan--t'ataag' taba.

The Tavgi reindeer is distinguished by its small size, being from 110 to 120 centimeters in height; it is weak and unsuitable for riding, but on the other hand it is distinguished by its great endurance, is accustomed to the open tundra, bears easily the severe cold of winter, and does not run away into a blizzard; quick to become emaciated, it is also quick to put on weight even with the scantiest fodder. It has a fleshy head, a short neck and legs, and a broad back. The Tungus or forest reindeer is big and strong, often attaining the height of 127 centimeters, and has thick horns. In its powers of endurance it may well be in last place, after the Tavgi and Dolgan reindeer. The Tungus reindeer is usually sheltered in the taiga from snowstorms, and is quite unaccustomed to the severe cold of the tundra and does not stand it well. Notwithstanding its strength, it requires frequent rest periods when it is traveling. The Dolgan reindeer also is strongly attracted by the forests, but living on the border between the forest and the tundra it has more endurance than the Tungus reindeer; it attains a height of 118 centimeters, and it has an almost completely level back and thin, sharp horns. The Dolgan reindeer is weaker than the Tungus, but stronger than the Tavgi reindeer. Both the Tungus and the Dolgan reindeer are quick to grow emaciated and are not so quick to put on weight even when there is an abundance of fodder. The best breed of reindeer is considered to be that obtained by crossing the Dolgan and the Tavgi; this kind is quite large and strong, and is also distinguished by its endurance. From what has been said we can see that the farther north we find the reindeer, the weaker and smaller it is, but it also has greater endurance since it is used to harsh climatic conditions.

In summer the Dolgan reindeer feed exclusively on grass and the leaves of the dwarf alder, and they especially love the young sprouts of grass and mushrooms; besides this, in summer they do not mind feasting on mice upon occasion, and they also break the shells of birds' eggs and drink the contents. In winter the basic food of the reindeer is Iceland moss, a type of lichen. But, besides this, in winter the reindeer devours everything that turns up: clothing, meat and fish; the reindeer feels an especially great need for salt, for the

233 satisfaction of which it runs after people, expecting their help.

Recently there have begun to appear among the Dolgan the "aaku"-reindeer, a type which is fed exclusively on grain in the form of flour, dried bread crumbs, small ring-shaped crackers, and cookies. They become quite tame and are outstanding for their great strength and endurance.

233
476 In summer the herds of several owners unite to form one big herd which is often quite large in size. In the first place, such large herds formed from smaller ones result in economizing of the working forces, since a considerably smaller number of people is required to look after these large herds [185] [Figure 1] than is needed for the separate smaller herds which united to form the larger one; in the second place, when dark clouds, gnats, and gadflies pass over the tundra, the large herd does not disperse like the small herds do; the reindeer bunch up and keep revolving constantly, since each one of the circling group tries to squeeze into the center in order to protect his sides from the bites of the gnats. When they drive the reindeer to the camp, the latter do this "circle dance" of theirs around the chooms, which threatens to knock them down. In the case of animals with such habits very few persons are required to pasture a large herd, since the only work they have to do amounts to driving the strays back into the herd.

Another advantage of having the large herds in summer is the fact that there is a sufficiently large number of workers for the times when it is necessary to guard the herd day and night--at the time when the grass grows in spring, and during the mushroom period in the summer; the sufficiently large number of people makes it possible for them to take regular shifts at the pasture, which almost never has the effect of withdrawing the working forces in the economy.

233 When evening comes on, the herd is driven to the camp by the day herders and is taken over (if the herd is not too large) by the night herders. When the satiated reindeer lie down the night herders--in the winter on sleds, in the summer riding on reindeer--make their rounds several times with a dog. If the pasturing takes place in the fall, when it is too dark, they build a fire. If the herd becomes frightened upon scenting a wolf, the herders shout and make a lot of noise in order to drive the animal away. In the case of a very large herd the wolf sometimes does not flee from the noise but hides behind the reindeer and continues to harass them.

In order to protect the reindeer from gnats the natives build "smoke fires" with moss--saamniit--and in order to prevent the

233 reindeer from burning themselves they erect several poles--buota--in the shape of a cone over the smoke fire. Another, more effective measure against the vermin is that of making a nomadic trip to the north or to the high hilltops, where it is colder than in the low places of the tundra. But in their wanderings over the rocky hilltops the reindeer wear down their hoofs, which therefore often become affected with hoof cancer and require careful attention.

In winter the herd is driven some distance away from the camp to a moss pasture, and if this is situated at a quite considerable distance, several "aaku" or other more domesticated reindeer are left at the chooms so that in case of necessity it will be possible to use them both for driving home the herd and for short excursions from the camp. In a severe blizzard the reindeer behave in exactly the same way as when they are beset by gnats in the summertime: they gather together into a bunch and each of them tries his best to force his way into the center of the herd. This continues until the cold begins to chill the reindeer; well-fed reindeer will hold out in such a blizzard for a period of three days, after which they disperse in various directions against the wind, so that their fur is not blown against its direction of growth. In cases like this the Tavgi reindeer have a great advantage since, being used to the open tundra, they easily endure the blizzard and do not run away.

231 Great help is afforded to the herders by the Tavgi reindeer dogs.
233 Small, short-legged, and for the most part all white, they remind one of polar foxes [Figure 1]. When it is necessary to drive the herd home one has only to point with his [186] hand, whistle, and cry out: "Truu, truu, sar syar!"--and the dog will be off like a shot and round up all the reindeer in a trice. Usually when there is a large number of reindeer two dogs are released and they drive the herd home by running about on two opposite sides of it. Knowing this "nasty" habit of the dogs, the reindeer cannot bear them; they submit to the dogs while in the herd, but if a lone deer encounters a dog he will attack him with his horns. Some dogs bite calves to death in the excitement of driving the reindeer home. In order that the dogs may not harass the reindeer unnecessarily during the nomadic wanderings they are tied to sleds in winter, and in summer they are hobbled by having one of their forelegs tied up. In order that their forelegs may not grow numb, they have their right and left legs tied alternately. The reindeer dogs are usually bought from the Tavgi and are quite expensive, good ones being exchanged for as much as two reindeer, where the value of one

231 reindeer is twenty-five to thirty rubles.

233 The runaway reindeer give a lot of trouble. In order to hold them
back a ring made out of rose willow is put around their neck, and
233 on this is hung a small wooden block in the shape of a fork, or a
long stick left thick at one end so as to support the crosspiece
through which it is thrust [Figure 2b]. Sometimes these types of blocks are hastily replaced in case of necessity by a stick fastened at its mid point to the neck of the reindeer [Figure 2c]. The small block strikes the reindeer painfully on the knees, thus preventing him from running. But there are still more wild domestic reindeer--tehii taba, or s'r'' taba--which are always trying to get away from the herd by some means; as if that were not enough, they lure the others away by their bad example. Such reindeer have a small block--the mene [Figure 2d]--put on their foreleg, and a cord is tied tightly around their back leg above the joint [Figure 2, upper right], so that when they run off to one side they are forced to follow the herd on three legs. In order not to lose the runaway reindeer the natives make bells out of tin and fasten them to the necks of the runaways; the bells are called kyoy leen [Figure 2a]. In cases where the runaways are mares they leave the calves with them, and to restrain the mares the calves are tied to trees, if there is a forest. In order that the calf may not get himself all tangled up, the natives strip enough bark off the tree around which the rope is tied so that the loop will slide freely. However, they do this only in the autumn, when the gnats have disappeared.

2.

In spite of the fact that the reindeer is widely used as a beast of burden, it has still not become completely domesticated. Each year the domestic reindeer break away from the herd in dozens and increase the number of wild reindeer. They run away during a blizzard, or in the summer while searching for mushrooms, and never return. The mass raids of the wild reindeer--the "aalin"--are a serious threat to the Dolgan economy. In spite of such a negative feature the domestic reindeer are a real boon for the inhabitants of the northern regions; it is only thanks to them that hunting is possible, to say nothing of the fact that both the food and the clothing of the natives is obtained from the reindeer.

How true is the observation of A. F. Middendorf that for human beings the chief quality of the reindeer is its submissiveness, which makes it an obedient implement in the hands of a man both to a much greater degree than the horse, and with much less exertion on

233 the part of the human being! But the domestic reindeer is also terribly importunate. No matter how many times you drive a reindeer away from your sled--even injuring him in the process--you have only to turn around and back he comes again to start eating your traveling clothing, the straps, the separate parts which fasten the sled together, and so forth. The good qualities of the reindeer as a beast of burden are his endurance and his ability to find quickly the right direction even in the most severe blizzard, when it is impossible to distinguish anything at a distance of two or three paces.

233 In winter a reindeer harnessed to a light sled runs along at the
492 rate of twenty-five to thirty kilometers an hour; when harnessed to a freight sled it does seven or eight kilometers an hour. In summer the riding reindeer in the same time will cover only three or four kilometers, but such slowness is compensated for by another valuable [187] [Figure 2] [188] quality of the reindeer--the ability, thanks to its broad hoofs, to traverse any kind of a swamp without getting stuck, and in winter it can do the same over deep snow drifts. These hoofs support the reindeer on the steep slopes of mountains, and allow him to stand with his feet on such small and shifting mounds as would scarcely allow any other kind of animal to support himself. The reindeer is also irreplaceable in crossing the turbulent mountain streams: he swims excellently and is able to withstand the strong onslaught of the waves in rapids and waterfalls. The author remembers crossings of the rocky and turbulent streams of the Noril'sk Mountains, the noisy waves of which, striking with great force, threatened to smash reindeer or man against the rocks if either fell. It was necessary to make great efforts not to fall, by leaning with a staff on the slippery stone stream bed. It seemed that at any moment the reindeer would wallow on his side, that his head was spinning from the rapid motion, but nevertheless he stepped along on the wet and slippery stones, kept his balance on them by some miracle, and emerged safe and sound on the opposite bank of the stream.

For riding the natives use for the most part castrated bucks, but they also use mares. They remove the necessary number of thoroughbred bucks from the herd and use them to sire offspring; all the bucks are castrated. The best time for this is considered to be early spring before the appearance of the gnats, or autumn before the snow falls. The operation is performed for the most part on two-year-olds; the natives avoid castrating bucks older than six years, for they

233 492 say that they die from it. The castration is performed in the following way: the natives "throw" the reindeer, two of them hold the reindeer by the legs, and one kneels down and chews the buck's testicles until they are destroyed.

[283] For catching the reindeer the natives use the "maam' t"--a rope which may be as long as 160 meters and which is plaited out for four or five thin straps. On one end of the maam' t there is a crosspiece made of a little stick--the karaka, or 'knot'--which is passed through both openings in a bone plate--the "pietelke." Before catching a reindeer with the maam' t the natives wind it around their left elbow, holding part of the rope--the part which does not have the loop formed by means of the "pietelke"--in their left hand; they take the other part of the rope in their right hand and, swinging it around, they throw it at the head of the reindeer they have chosen. The noose with the bone plate falls over the horns and tightens. Sometimes two men throw the maam' t at one reindeer at the same time from opposite sides of him. This method of catching the reindeer is called mokkytterer (to compel to fight). Often in winter and in summer at the time of the gnats, when the reindeer cluster together in a bunch, several men circle the herd with outstretched maam' t and act as a fence, which allows the other persons to go into the midst of the herd and catch reindeer with their bare hands. This method of catching reindeer is called eritterer (to compel to go around).

The Dolgan attain amazing skill in throwing the maam' t; they start practicing it when they are very young, throwing the maam' t over the horns of slain reindeer.

233 284 Once the animals have been caught the natives want to lead them to the place where they are to be harnessed or have a load put on them, and in order to do this they "string" the reindeer--five or six, and even more, at a time on one maam' t, tying them by means of dull knots called ile baaj'' (simple binding) or iliinnen sieter baaj'' (ribbon for leading by the bridle) [Figure 2g]. These knots have the drawback that they can tighten up and choke the reindeer, and for this reason they are only used for leading the reindeer over short distances. In order to lead reindeer by the same method over longer distances special knots that do not tighten up are used; they are called tuomtuu tarder (the binding which is quickly undone) [Figure 2f].

In addition, they use still other knots for tying one reindeer: a) er kihi baaj''ta (the male binding) and b) çaktar baaj''ta (the female

233 binding) [Figure 2h-i]. A man never uses a female knot to tie a
284 reindeer, for he would be laughed at if he did. They tie the rein-
[412] deer to trees or bushes; in those places where there are no trees
or bushes--for example, on the hilltops--the reindeer are tied to
special wooden pegs--the kojnos--about forty or fifty centimeters
in length, which are stuck into the ground and which at the same
time serve as digging sticks for unearthing edible roots [Fig. 2e].

233 In summer the Dolgan ride reindeer, and only their "twigs"
492 (boats) are carried on special sledges with two crossbars; in winter,
however, they ride on sleds exclusively. [189] According to the
stories, in ancient times they rode only reindeer both summer and
winter and borrowed the sledge gear later from the Tavgi.

The reindeer harness is in reality not as simple as it would appear at first glance; and incidentally, in all the Russian ethnographic literature we do not have anything like a complete description of it. If someone who knew nothing of the ways of harnessing reindeer were to take it into his head to hitch one up [Fig. 3] according to the descriptions found in the available literature, he would find out that he was quite helpless. Any ethnographic description can be completely scientific only if by following it one could completely and precisely duplicate the described event or object, and it is our task to strive toward this end with all possible efforts. To give a detailed description of the Dolgan winter reindeer harness means to give a description of the harness which is the most widespread at the present time in the north, starting from Scandinavia and extending to the eastern tip of Asia, excluding the Paleo-Asiatics. Such insignificant variations among the separate peoples who live in the aforementioned territory as, for example, the fact that the Nenets and the Tavgi steer from the left side while the Dolgan steer from the right side, and other minor details, do not change the general construction of the summer and winter harnesses of the reindeer.

The bast' ŋa--the halter used for riding a reindeer [Fig. 2k] consists of a strap sewn together in the form of a circle and placed on the forehead; fastened to its sides are two small straps made of reindeer hide [Fig. 2e-m] by means of which the halter is fastened at the back of the head; to the lower part is sewn a strap called njuogu--a small rein for guiding the reindeer [Fig. 2n]. The halters
[531] of female reindeer, the reindeer used as pack animals, and the
"shaytan'i" riding reindeer (1) have the part over the forehead

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1. "Shaytan'i" riding reindeer are reindeer on which are

[531] carried the holy objects of the household--the "shaytany."

233

492 trimmed with green or red cloth and are decorated with glass beads [Fig. 2o]. In order that the reindeer which is being led by the rein attached to the first reindeer may not pull back, the natives put on him a halter with a bone comb known as the keebee [Fig. 2p-r]. When the reindeer begins to slow down the teeth of the comb dig into the back of his head causing enough pain to make him run faster.

Saddles are of two types: the first--the male type--is the çykeeŋdii [Fig. 3A], and the second--the female or pack type-- is the 'ŋ"r [Fig. 3B]. The male saddle consists of two long boards fixed parallel to each other by means of [190] two curved branch pieces of horn or branches of a tree which have been sawed off to the proper length and then nailed to the ends of the boards. The boards are sewn round with leather which is stuffed with reindeer fur, forming a s'tt'k--two cushions for sitting on. On the female saddles, or packsaddles, in place of the horns which do not stick up above the cushions there are high semicircular pommels on the front and back ends called soroon. [Figure 4]

[531] The frame of the female saddle, or packsaddle is more massive in construction, the cushions are thicker and broader, and the lower part of the front pommel is trimmed with red or green cloth and is decorated with glass beads [Fig. 3r]. The front pommel is completely covered with red ocher, the rear pommel is left white and is only decorated with ocher. On packsaddles, besides this, the rear pommel is richly decorated with tin incrustations [Fig. 3h]. All forms of the saddles have a crack running down the whole length of the middle which fits precisely over the shoulder blades and vertebrae of the reindeer. The saddle is not placed over the center of the reindeer's spine, but rather on the shoulder blades, since the spinal column of the Dolgan reindeer is not strong enough to bear the weight and breaks under the strain.

A female or pack reindeer is saddled up in the following manner [Fig. 4]: first the saddle is mounted on the reindeer, and then a small rug made of reindeer heads--the dah'na--is put on so that the bags will not rub sores on the sides of the reindeer, and then two bags sewed together from hide obtained from reindeer legs and tied together are thrown across the saddle. All this is made secure with a leather saddle girth called timeektiin [Fig. 2r] which is three or four fingers in breadth and has an iron ring on one end. Bags are never thrown across a male saddle; [Fig. 5] the saddle is simply

233 placed on the shoulder blades of the reindeer in the same way as
492 has just been described, and without any covering on it is tightened to the reindeer's back by means of the timeektiin [Fig. 5].

The natives mount the reindeer from the right side. In mounting they hold the rein in the left hand, leaning with this hand on the front pommel of the saddle; with the other hand they lean on a staff, which is replaced by a spear when they are going hunting, and then they throw the left leg across the saddle. The reindeer staffs are of two types--the male tajak, which has the shape of a simple stick long enough to be comfortably leaned on while the rider is sitting on the reindeer [Fig. 6a]; and the female staff, called njuorii, which has an iron top with a crook at the end of it [Fig. 6b]. Women sitting on reindeer lean on the staffs, grasping them with their hands below the tops, and with the crooks thrust under the edges of their sleeves [Fig. 6]. The staffs of old and poor women do not have iron tops, but simply have a wooden crosspiece on the top [Fig. 6c]. Riding on the back of a reindeer [Fig. 7] calls for great skill, especially on the male saddle, which has no pommels. If one who is not in the habit rides this way his legs become dropsical, since they hang free without any stirrups. In order not to fall off while he is riding, the rider must constantly lean on his staff with his right hand. When the rider wishes to turn the reindeer to the left he presses his right leg against the cheek of the reindeer; if he wishes to turn to the right he pulls [191] [Figures 6 and 7] on the rein. A load of not more than fifty kilograms is put on a riding reindeer without a rider.

The bast'ŋa--the halter of the winter harness of the front (lead) reindeer [Fig. 8A]--has on the part which goes over the forehead instead of a strap two plates made from horns which have been sawed up in the middle. One of these--the long bent one (on the left)--is called the s'ŋaak muoha (cheekbone) [Fig. 8b]; the straight short one (on the right) is called the njuogu muoha (the bone of the halter) [Fig. 8c]. There are openings located in the extreme ends of each plate, and through each plate is passed a thong [Fig. 8e]; these thongs are tied behind the back of the head of the reindeer in order to hold the halter securely. On the right (guiding) side of the halter is fastened a long rein--the njuogu [Fig. 8d]--which is used to guide the reindeer and which is sometimes braided together out of five or eight thin straps. When the rider pulls on the rein, the horn plates on the reindeer's forehead press on the arch of its brow and force it to turn to the right. The halters of the outrunner reindeer [Fig. 8B] are different from the

233 halter of the lead reindeer; the former have two cheekbone plates
492 made of mammoth bone--s'ŋ aak muoha [Fig. 8g]--and are often richly decorated with carving; each of the plates has an opening in each end. Through the two openings at the top is passed the strap which runs across the forehead; through each of the two openings at the rear is passed a thong, one of which ends in a noose, the other in a copper button or a wooden buckle; these two thongs are fastened together behind the head of the reindeer. A strap called the kostuur b'a, which is connected to the bellyband of the right reindeer of the team, is fastened below the halter or to the opening located in the center of the cheekbone plate. A strap called the ala or laamp' is a long strip of hide, or of morocco leather which has been purchased, ten to fifteen centimeters wide; this is put on the reindeer obliquely, passing over one shoulder, the chest, and one leg. To one side of the strap is fastened a thong--the ahaan b'a [Fig. 9g]--by means of which the strap is held against the neck of the reindeer and does not slip down. The ends of the strap are connected by means of [192] [Fig. 8] a thong to the ends of the girth, called the kur, which is thirty to thirty-five centimeters in width and which encompasses the front part of the body of the reindeer like a ring [Fig. 9j]. A leather loop is fastened on the inside of each side--right and left--of the girth at a point approximately one-quarter of the way around, starting from the ends. To one of these is fastened an iron or a copper ring--tierbes [Fig. 9w]--about eight centimeters in diameter, which has on one side a thong with a wooden buckle on its end. This thong is passed through the openings in the ends of the ala strap and is buckled to the other loop on the inside of the girth. Behind the iron ring is fastened an iron hook called kiraapiik, through which is passed the rein [Fig. 9z and cc]. These hooks have two forms; they are either shaped like a Russian capital "L" [that is, "Л".--Translator.] with curled ends, or like a Latin "S," and they are often made of twisted iron. The first type of hook is considered to be the more practical, since it eliminates the possibility that the rein (the traces) might become unfastened and fall to the ground. Both of the aforementioned types of hooks are nowadays gladly replaced by bought iron buckles together with dog chains [Fig. 9bb].

In the last ten to fifteen years the so-called Yurak harness--çuraakt'' kəlyyr--has begun to be used among the Dolgan with great success. In this type of harness the iron ring is absent; the thong, which runs from one side of the girth, is passed through the opening in the opposite side of the ala strap and is buckled to the other side

233 of the ala strap on the inside. However, the rein from the sled is
492 connected directly by means of a wooden buckle to the ends of the
ala strap [Fig. 9ff]. The great success of this type of harness is due to the fact that the iron ring does not rub a hole in the reindeer's hide.

A hook called gugaarka is fastened to the girth of the lead reindeer on the right side, and over this is thrown the rein in order that it may not drag along the ground [Fig. 9As]; this gugaarka may be of bone [Fig. 9s] or of iron, encrusted with either silver or copper, and hung with rings [Fig. 9t], and it is an ornament among the youth of the area [Facing 192: Figure 9 on an unpaginated unfolding insert] [193] valued at one reindeer (twenty-five to thirty rubles). The bone gugaarka are preferred by hunters, since the metal ones frighten the wild reindeer with their jingling. On the left side of the girth is fastened either a wooden or a bone plate, through the two openings of which is passed a loop made out of rope, which is connected by means of the ahaan b'a thong with the halter of another reindeer of the team. The rein--called pobotuok--is a long strap made of hide, about two centimeters in width, and terminating either in a loop--which is slipped over the kiraapiik hook to hold the rein in place, or onto the iron buckle of the ring--or in a small wooden stick, which is passed through the ends of the ala strap. The rein is of two types: the main rein--the tojon poboduok [Fig. 9k]--and the outrunner rein [Fig. 9L]. There is usually only one main rein on any team; this is terminated on both ends by loops or wooden buckles, and it connects the outermost reindeer on one side of the team with the outermost reindeer on the other side of the team; the outrunner rein is half as long and it connects the center outrunner reindeer [Fig. 10] to the sled; one outrunner rein is necessary for each out-
233 runner reindeer. The reins pass between the hind legs of the rein-
401 deer and run through the whole system of pulleys tied to the front of
492 the sled, which are fastened on at various points, depending on the
position of the reindeer in the team. On every sled there are two side pulleys situated always in the same place; these are fastened to the front ends of the runners in the following way: a strap is passed down through a special opening in the end of the left runner; the short end of this strap is passed through a second (smaller) opening in the pulley; then through this same opening the strap is passed upward again and the end of it is tied in a knot. The long part of the strap is thrown across to the end of the right runner, where there is the same kind of opening, and a pulley is tied on in exactly the same

233 401 492 way as on the left runner, the only difference being that the end of the rope is tied to the end of the side board, or the lath called bajka--in the local Russian pronunciation "bayki" [Fig. 9r]. This strap is tied to the crossbeam of the sled in the middle, between the ends of the runners. Only the main rein is passed through the pulleys on the outward sides of the sled. Pulleys for the simple reins of the reindeer between the two outer reindeer of the team are located between the two pulleys on the extreme outboard sides of the sled in all possible combinations, depending on the position and function of the reindeer which are fastened to the sled. Where the team consists of only two reindeer, only the two outboard pulleys and one main rein are used; where there are three reindeer in the team, three pulleys are used; where there are four reindeer in the team, five pulleys are used; where there are five reindeer, seven pulleys are used; six reindeer require nine pulleys; and eight reindeer require seven pulleys [Fig. 9L, 2, 3, 4, and 5]. The last type of team is very rarely used; for the most part it is used in the summer when a boat is being transported during a nomadic trip. In this team arrangement only the main reins alone are used; one main rein is run from each of the four reindeer which make up the second rank, and the ends of these reins connect the reindeer in pairs [Fig. 9d--k].

The pulleys called toŋooldo or celaak are made from reindeer horn or from wood, and are of two types: the cargo pulleys [Fig. $9m_1$], which are the more massive, and the pulleys for light riding [Fig. $9m_2$], which are [194] thinner. They are usually different in their forms, varying from an irregular rectangle to a diamond in shape. The cargo pulleys and the outboard pulleys each have two large openings: one of these is wide, and it is for the main rein; the narrow opening is for the rope which fastens them to the ends of the runners. Both of the openings are made large on the middle pulleys, since the simple rein is tied to the upper opening and the main rein passes through the lower opening. An interesting type of pulley is that with five narrow openings; it is made that way so that in case the pulley breaks off at the first opening the rein can be passed through the second opening; in case the pulley breaks off at the second opening the rein can be passed through the third opening, and so forth. This saves the natives from having to make a new pulley while on a trip--a job which is not especially pleasant in cold weather [Fig. $9m_4$]. If one has only pulleys with one large opening and he has to harness up more than two reindeer he ties the pulleys

233 together in pairs and thus obtains the equivalent of one pulley with
401 two large openings [Fig. 9m].

492 This method of harnessing the reindeer is quite convenient thanks to the system of pulleys: each of the reindeer pulls an equal share of the load, and a contributing factor here is the fact that going from right to left the reins of the reindeer get progressively shorter
[531] [Fig. 9A]. The ala strap and the girth of the dressharness are covered with red or green cloth and decorated with varicolored glass beads, or else the parts made of reindeer hide are decorated with designs sewn with thread made from reindeer tendons. The cargo harness is much simpler: it consists only of an ala strap, which is canvas for the most part (made from sacks), and there is no girth at all. Usually there is no halter either; the reindeer are tied by their necks to the back of the front sled. There are either two or four reindeer in a cargo team and when there are four each pair of them has only one neck-rope [Figs. 8C and 9N]. We think it is helpful to reproduce a special drawing [Fig. 10] in order to introduce a simplified description of the terms used by the local Russian speakers for the parts of the sled.

493 Reindeer sleds among the Dolgan can be separated into five types: 1) Bytej s'rga, or olok s'rga--the "covered" or light sled [Fig. 11]; 2) 'raak'--"iraka" in the local Russian pronunciation [Fig. 12]; 3) setii s'rga--the cargo sled, or the sled "which is lead" [Fig. 13]; 4) tard'' or turku--the cargo sled [Fig. 14]; and 5) turkucaaŋk', or little turku [Fig. 16].

[783] The "covered" sled is used exclusively for light riding; in the Noril'sk Rayon only the women ride on them--the men consider this a profanation for themselves, since after a trip on a female sled it would be necessary for them to cross over the path of the shaytany--the household spirits--or of a wild animal, which is considered to be unclean. In other regions this rule is not observed: there men too ride on "covered" sleds. The "covered" sled is distinguished by high legs forty-five to fifty centimeters long, of which there are five, eight, twelve, or fourteen on one sled. These legs are slanted toward the back of the sled, and they are mounted in such a way that they are farther apart from each other at the bottom than they are at the top [Fig. 10]. This is done so that the considerable height of the body of the sled will not make the whole sled unstable and allow it to turn over. Such a construction is also convenient in that it allows a person sitting in the sled to stand with his feet on the runners, which stick out beyond the line of the so-called "bayka," in

493 case this is necessary during the journey. The stems of these legs are left thicker for greater strength at those points where they pass the opening for the end of the towrope. The upper ends of these legs are stuck into special openings in the projecting cornice of the bayka. The bayka is made from the boards of a larch tree which has a bend at the root in the shape of a tube, as a result of which there is a high bend in the back part to which is fastened the narrow board called tyntyr--which forms the "heel" or "tundra"--by means of an insertion with a strap or by using wooden nails. The same kind of board is fastened on in the front, as a result of which the sled is accordingly called "covered." The runners are thin at their front part, which is bent; the back part, which is straight, gradually grows thicker, forming a beam with four smoothed angles, and the back ends of the runners are pointed. The thin front parts of the runners have thick places [195] [Figures 11, 12, and 13] with openings vertically--through which is passed the rope which fastens the outboard pulleys on--and horizontally--for the crosspiece, called tuoraj, which connects both runners in the front; and since there are two or three crosspieces on the fancy sleds, there are [196] accordingly as many openings in the runners. A board flooring, tied onto the frame with straps or nailed to the towropes of the supporting legs with wooden nails, forms the seat (olok).

The open sled, or iraka, a light male sled, is distinguished from the preceding type of sled by its shorter legs, two to six in number, and it does not have the "tundra," for which reason it is called open--ahagas s'rga; the bayka is made of two straight laths, and the legs are slanted only to a slight degree. In the other details of its construction this type of sled is no different from the "covered" sled.

A particular type of iraka with two legs is called sobgooldo by the Tungus. The legs do not slant but are exactly vertical. The sobgooldo are for riding, but especially for transporting boats, and
[735] have no board flooring [Fig. 15]. The riding sobgooldo are not used
[538] very often; usually poor people ride on them, and a sarcastic attitude toward them is found among the Dolgan. In the epos it is predominantly representatives of the evil spirits or heroes who are being ridiculed, who ride on a sobgooldo.

Both of the above-mentioned types of sleds keep their length constant when the number of legs on them is increased. Therefore, when the number of legs is increased, the distance between adjacent legs is decreased. The slant of the legs is a result of the fact that

493 the openings in the runners are made at an angle. The opening in the front end of the runner which is used for the end of the bayka is also bored at an angle slanting upwards. If the legs were not slanted the sled would become rickety under the strain when the runners get wet through and tend to straighten out, thus pushing the frame of the sled back. The slanted opening for the end of the bayka serves to support the runners and keep them from straightening out. In order to prevent the runners from straightening out on the two-legged iraka, which has its legs sticking straight up, the openings for the ends of the bayka have a downward slant.

The setii s'rga--the cargo sled--is used during the winter nomadic trips. In its construction it is somewhat similar to the first type of sled, but is distinguished from the latter by its greater dimensions and its massiveness; in the front and back it has high "tundras," which also form something similar to a box into which even small objects can be put without fearing that they will fall out and get lost. The legs--which are still longer than those of the "covered" sled--are four or five in number; they are likewise slanted toward the back of the sled. Cargo sleds--or "koshovki," as they are called locally--are not used among the Dolgan; they are used exclusively for the transportation of loads by commercial organizations of the tundra. They are gotten ready in autumn in Dudinka; they may be as long as three meters, and have three short (twenty centimeters), broad legs, with a distance between them of from sixty to eighty centimeters. The runners are made broad or thin, with a bend almost at the front tip, and to avoid their straightening out they are usually hewn out of a tree with a natural curve at the root. The thin top ends of the legs have a semicircle cut out of them on the outboard side, in which is fixed a long thin stick which substitutes for the bayka.

493 The turkucaaŋk'--the little turku--is a light male sled, entirely
531 similar in type to the turku, but smaller in its dimensions; it is distinguished from the turku by the elegance of its trimming; by its high, decorated board back [Fig. 16]; by the netting made out of straps which is put along the sides of the sled so that things cannot fall out of the sled; and by the legs and runners, which are painted with brown ocher, with black graphite, or with dark blue or green paint which has been purchased; the sled has three or four short legs. The little turku is widespread beyond the Khatanga River among the Transtundra Yakut and is almost entirely absent in the west.

284 Although in the first three types of sleds the predominant means
493 of holding the parts together is wooden nails, which have the advantage of not becoming fragile, as do iron nails in the intense cold, in the last two types all the separate parts are held together by means of straps.

233 To the front part of the setii s'rga, the turku, and the turkucaaŋk'
492 is fastened a thick shaft-bow made of rose willow--the kab' rga, or
493 "ram" ["male sheep"--Translator]. However, just as among the northern Yakut, among the Dolgan this does not serve as something to tie the rein to; the rein is passed through pulleys which are fastened directly to the crosspiece of the sled, and the rein passes [197] under the ram. This was explained as being due to the fact that if the reins are allowed to pass over the top of the ram they are high enough up in the air to rub sores on the legs of the reindeer, whereas the ram keeps the reins down low all the time; but such an explaination is not convincing to me personally. Thus, we see that the ram, having lost its main function as the shaft-bow by which the sled was pulled, among the Dolgan serves only as a "bumper" to prevent the sleds from breaking when they collide with trees. [Fig. 14] In the cargo harness, the rein is sometimes passed both above and below the ram, so that in case the pulley breaks the sled will not have to stop, since the reindeer can pull it by the ram.

233 A characteristic peculiarity of the winter harness for reindeer is
284 the absence of knots, which are replaced by wooden buckles; these
492 are quite convenient in severe cold, when the fingers become frostbitten after being exposed for a moment, and for this reason it is important that the shortest possible time be spent in harnessing up the team. If it should be necessary to tie knots in the reins, for example, the natives make knots which can be quickly untied [Fig. 9L]. [Fig. 15].

233 When the natives are riding in winter they urge the reindeer on
492 with a stick about four meters long; they poke the end of the stick into the hind quarters of the reindeer, since, on account of its thick hair, the reindeer is completely insensitive to other methods of prodding. This stick--the kyrej, or "khorey" in Russian [Fig. 9b]--has on its top end a small bone circle to prevent the reindeer being pierced by the stick. On the lower end of the "khorey" is fixed an iron tip of a spear--the ynyy--with a blunt point [Fig. 9ee]. With this the front rider tests the thickness of the ice on rivers in the autumn to see whether the caravan can cross over them or not. This tip also enables the natives to poke the stick upright in the snow when

233 they halt during the journey.

492 When the natives want to stop the reindeer, they pull on the rein, turn them back toward the sled, and tie the lead reindeer to the top of one of the legs or to the bayka. The natives do not sit [198] on the sled right away when they start up: they first get the reindeer in motion and run alongside him for a while holding on to the rein. Then while the sled is moving they quickly jump onto the runner with their feet and sit down on the sled. They do it this way so that it will be easier for the reindeer to start the sled moving. If it is necessary to turn the reindeer to the right they pull on the rein; if they want to turn the team to the left they strike lightly with their khorey on the right side of the lead reindeer. The reindeer learn very quickly to follow directions when being ridden; they begin to be trained at the age of three years. A reindeer which has not been trained for riding is tied securely to a tree and a rider sits astride him. After fooling around a little the reindeer calms down, and after a few days becomes completely obedient. The natives train them to pull in a harness by hitching up an untrained reindeer with trained ones. Nevertheless, there is always some skill required to train reindeer: otherwise the reindeer turns out to be bad and capricious. When a riding reindeer gets stubborn, he stands quietly waiting while the rider climbs into the saddle, and then he folds his front legs under him and bends his head down; when this happens the man flies off head first.

[526] The Dolgan attain great skill and agility at riding. For amusement they sit astride the reindeer facing backwards and drive the reindeer at top speed without using a staff to support themselves. Another trick is to drive a light sled at frightful speed down a wooded slope from the top of a mountain in winter without smashing up the sled. The maximum useful life of a reindeer which is harnessed up only in the winter or only in the summer is twelve to fifteen years; if he is harnessed both summer and winter the limit is five to six years, since the latter quickly gets infected or inflamed feet. In the big herds of rich people many reindeer are not harnessed at all; it is said that these reindeer may live to the age of thirty years.

The reindeer grow fat only in the summer and are "plump" until the polar sunrise, after which they begin to grow thin; the reindeer are fast runners in winter, but as early as April or May-- or sometimes even by the end of March--they begin to get tired, run slowly in harness, and often swing off the road and stop. If a reindeer lives until the end of May the natives assume that he will not die of

233 starvation. In June the reindeer has already become noticeably
492 fatter. In autumn and winter the natives harness mostly female
reindeer; in the spring they ride exclusively on bucks, protecting
the cows which are with calf. The natives said that not so long
ago they made a practice of not harnessing the mares to the sleds
beginning about ten days after the mare had copulated with a buck,
in order to avoid miscarriages.

If a reindeer collapses from hunger while being ridden, in order
to force him to go on the natives knead him in the stomach with
their fists, and if this is of no avail, they cut off one of his ears.
3.

233 The reindeer, which is an object of private property, is marked
422 by each owner with a particular sign called the belie. The most
reliable markings are considered to be figures made by making cuts
in the ears of the animal, without making any distinction between
the right and left ear; these ear cuts have different appellations
depending on their form [Fig. 17]. Independently of the markings on
the ears, the natives cut signs with a knife in the form of different
combinations of lines in the hair on the sides of the reindeer [Fig.
18]. They do this in the month of the spring sunrise, after the polar
night--the time of severe cold--has passed, in order that the reindeer
may not get frostbitten in the places where the hair has been
cut off. The signs of ownership are the same both for bucks and for
mares. Cult signs, as among the Tavgi, are not found among the
233 Dolgan. When the children of a family grow up and are given part
428 of the reindeer herd for their own, the old markings are left on the
grown reindeer, and the new markings are put only on the offspring.
The youngest son, who is the last in line to receive the family
[583] wealth, receives his father's markings by inheritance. The markings
233 of the husband are put on reindeer which are received as part of a
422 dowry. When an owner buys another reindeer he cuts his own markings
into its ears, and one may often see reindeer with several markings
in their ears. It must be added that when an owner has a large
herd not all the reindeer are marked with the signs of ownership. The
Dolgan have an amazing ability [Facing 198: Figure 16 on an unpaginated
insert] [199] to recognize their own reindeer even after
several years have passed, and even when the reindeer were only
calves when last seen. Rich reindeer breeders often have more reindeer
in their herds than they can count, but if they see one of their
own reindeer in someone else's herd they recognize it at once, even
if it has no markings; at the same time they are unable to say which

233 reindeer are missing in their own herds. We tried to find out how
422 this was done, but even the Dolgan themselves could not explain it,
but only said that it was so simple because the eye "gets used to"
233 one's own reindeer. [Fig. 17] If a strange reindeer attaches himself
425 to a herd the owner of the herd passes the word along and supports
the reindeer until its owner is found.

233 It must be concluded that the custom of regarding reindeer as
261 private property did not arise so long ago--perhaps even after the
422 Russians came--which can be seen from the following: 1) in summer
the reindeer owned by a rich man are treated as a food supply for the whole nomadic group in case of insufficiency of wild animals and birds; in such cases the reindeer are killed without any compensation for the owner; 2) the fact that it is only within the last few decades that the reindeer has become an object of merchandise. These questions are considered in greater detail in our work on the Dolgan clan, and for this reason we shall not dwell on them here.

233 Up to the present time there has existed the custom of rich men
427 lending reindeer "gratis" to poor men, which cannot help leading
to cases of open or hidden exploitation. Usually in the autumn the nearby poor men descend on a rich person and take reindeer from him for their needs for a month, for two months, or until spring, depending on the understanding; and if the borrowed reindeer is killed by a wolf or dies of a disease, the poor man does not have to make good the loss, but merely brings the hide from the reindeer's leg to the owner. An especially favorable environment for exploitation is formed when reindeer are lent to a poor man to import government loads: in this case the rich man gives the poor man several extra reindeer in order that the poor man may import the alloted load on them, and for this labor the latter is not repaid in any way, but the money for transporting the goods goes to the owner of the reindeer. The advantage of such an arrangement becomes clear when one realizes that under this system the rich man does not have to hire draymen at his own expense.

233 Besides the "gratis" dispensation of reindeer, there also exists ex-
432 change of reindeer, and--a later phenomenon--selling of reindeer.

437 In exchanging reindeer, A asks B for one of the latter's fine reindeer which A likes, offering in return a reindeer which is not equal in value to B's reindeer, or even a reindeer which is no good at all; as he does this, A says that later on B will obtain a good reindeer from him on the same terms. The selling of reindeer is not a frequent occurrence even nowadays among the Dolgan; they buy (that is, in 1929-1931) a buck for twenty-five or thirty rubles cash, or for

233 one polar fox, or for reindeer meat, fat, and hides, according to
432 the agreement; the last case is met with very rarely.

437 The increase in the size of their herds leads rich men to resort
to two applications of hired labor: 1) turning part of their herds over
233 to someone else to be looked after for the summer, and 2) hiring
464- herders.

465 [200] In the spring the rich reindeer breeder remains for the most
part near the rivers, where he lives a more peaceful settled life
[857] fishing. For the duration of this period he sends his reindeer into the
tundra, appointing as substitute master in place of himself one of
his children--even though he may be a mere child--to be attached
to the herders or to poor relatives, who, it goes without saying, receive
nothing for their work. If there are no children or relatives,
or if the latter are for some reason unwilling, a hired "master" is
found. The family of the latter is provided with flour, tea, and
tobacco until autumn, that is, until the return of the herd; to the
man (the herder) alone is given half of a thick, dressed hide for the
soles of his shoes and one chamois leather for his summer footgear.
But he is also given a summer Siberian fur coat; sometimes this is
already made, and sometimes he is told to kill such and such a reindeer
and to use its hide for clothing. As pay such a hired master receives
two or three reindeer for the summer's work. If a reindeer
dies from disease or is killed by some wild animal during the pasturing
time, the hired master is not held responsible, but is required to
present the hide from the reindeer's body and legs to the owner, provided
the reindeer did not die of some contagious disease.

In the fall the herd is driven home and handed over to the owner.
Men who live in the same choom as the master are chosen to look
after the herd in the winter. Usually such herdsmen are clanless
bachelors or poor men who have added their few reindeer to the herd
of the rich man, and who help out in the pasturing in return for this.
The aforementioned persons do not receive any pay besides food and
[736] winter clothing. To a second category of herdsmen belong orphans
who have been turned over to their relatives to be brought up, or the
children of poor men who are considered the wards of society and
who live with the rich man until they come of age. They are likewise
supplied with clothing and food, and they receive one or two
reindeer for their winter services, depending on the wishes of the
master. And finally, there are special hired herdsmen in the proportion
of two persons for each thousand reindeer. Under them there
is supposed to be a woman subordinate, who is supposed to mend
clothing, change the soles on footgear, dress and soften the hide for

233 their clothing, and sometimes even help to look after the reindeer.
464 Such a woman--the assistant of the herdsmen, receives as payment
465 for the winter's work one grown reindeer plus her food and clothing. The herdsmen likewise receive food, winter clothing, hide for the soles of their footgear, and four or five reindeer as their pay.

233 Notwithstanding the fact that the reindeer as a riding animal plays
438 the most important role in the life of the Dolgan and is closely con-
492 nected with the activity of hunting, nevertheless the carrier's trade as a source of revenue has no significance in the economy of the Dolgan. Reindeer are usually employed for transporting the goods of mercantile organizations from Dudinka to Anabar. A 320-kilogram load is placed on one cargo sled. The pay for transporting one pood (sixteen kilograms) as far as Khatanga (one thousand kilometers) is equal to seven rubles, or 140 rubles for one sled. The trip to Khatanga with a cargo sled takes two and one-half months at a minimum. During this time the carrier loses reindeer 1) from starvation (in winter the usual picture along the main route is the skinned corpses of fallen reindeer), and 2) from wolves. When we were passing through the territory one of our contractors was obliged to leave his load on the road, without carrying it to Volosyanka, and he himself was only able to reach his home on someone else's reindeer, on account of the fact that all of his own reindeer had been scattered by the wolves. And this is by no means a rare case. In general, on the road there is very great danger of losing one's reindeer, not only to the wolves, but also in blizzards, during raids made by wild reindeer, and so forth. On the other hand, the transportation of loads for pay has an unhealthy effect on the economy of the Dolgan, for it draws the polar-fox hunters away from their basic occupation. Insufficient supervision on the part of the regional authorities has compelled the population, to their detriment, to undertake the transportation of loads, notwithstanding the very convenient combination of waterways and the possibility of transporting goods along these routes. (1)

114 1. These questions [of reindeer transportation of goods--Analyst] were touched on at one time by us in print: *Sovetskaia etnografiia*, 1931, No. III-IV, in the article "Poezdka k dolganam" [A Trip to the Dolgan].

178 As long as the transportation problem remains unsolved the native
439 carriers with their reindeer will do great harm to the population; on

178 the other hand, [201] the possibilities for maximizing profits from
439 the sale in foreign markets of such valuable furs as polar fox are not
fully utilized, since on account of their trips transporting loads the
carters are compelled to cut down on the number of times they can
make the rounds of their traps.

233 In places where there are many fish and wild reindeer--for example,
262 in Pyasina--domestic reindeer are hardly ever used as food.
On the other hand, in places where there is little game, the average
family is forced to use a minimum of about forty head and more in
the course of a year, especially in the east, where the population
hardly uses any grain at all, substituting meat in its place. All
parts of the reindeer are used for food, not excluding even the contents
233 of the stomach. Reindeer milk is also used as food. [Fig. 18].
234 They milk reindeer from June until Shroud-Day, the holiday called
262 "Pokrov" [Feast of the Protection of the Holy Virgin] (November
14), but there are also some cows without calves which are milked
the year round. The milking is done once a day. In the summer they
usually milk the reindeer before tea, so as to have milk to pour into
their tea, and when they do this they milk with the right hand alone,
and with the left hand they hold a mug or an iron bucket under the
stream of milk. In winter they freeze the milk and eat it in this solid
233 form, chopped into small pieces. A cow usually gives a half-bucket
291 of thick, tasty milk. For eating purposes they kill only old and sick
reindeer; for clothing they kill almost exclusively young reindeer. If
a domestic reindeer is used for food during a scarcity of fish and wild
game, its hide is much more often used for clothing, at least among
the well-to-do, whereas the hide of a wild reindeer, owing to its
coarseness, is used only by poor people. We propose to give more detailed
information regarding the number of hides which are used by a
family in one year for their various needs in a separate work on the
clothing of the Dolgan.

321 From reindeer horns are fashioned various small household articles.

In concluding the ethnographic part of my work on reindeer breeding
121 among the Dolgan, I make the reservation that consideration of
the Dolgan ideology was consciously left out by me; in order to see
to what degree the whole religion of the Dolgan is permeated with
elements of reindeer breeding, it would be necessary to describe the
religion in a very detailed fashion, which is outside the scope of the
present sketch. It is much more expedient to give a description of
the religion separately in an independent work.

4.

233 [202] In conclusion I shall present biological data on the Dolgan reindeer.

The reindeer is covered with hair, which grows to a considerable length under the neck, forming a mane which sometimes reaches a length of thirty centimeters, particularly on grown bulls. The color of the hair on reindeer varies from black to a bright white; the light shades are most often found in the north among the Tavgi.

Even on the darkest-colored reindeer there are light hairs on the withers, the neck, the chest, and the belly, and also on the inner side of the thigh. The darkest color of black is found in the hair on the back of the reindeer. The calves are from dark to rusty-yellow in color, with a black stripe along the backbone. Notwithstanding the seeming monotony of hair color, the Dolgan employ the following, quite numerous terms to designate the color of reindeer: 1) cak'r ceelkee--completely white hair color; 2) boroŋ--ashy-grey; 3) kon nomuoj--completely black; 4) yryn,--dirty-brown; 5) kögörköj"--reddish-grey; 6) cuogur--dappled; 7) pecaattaak (with stamps)--having large spots; 8) suummut s'rajdaak (with a washed face)--having a white stripe in the middle of the muzzle; 9) Bugdiiska--having large spots; 10) cark'laak--white nosed; 11) ebir cuogur--having small spots, and 12) buruuna--grey. The predominant color of hair among the Dolgan reindeer is dark; they do not like light colors, for they say that the gnats and gadflies are attracted to them, and they try to sell light-colored reindeer to the Tavgi.

After the winter is over the reindeer begin to "shed hair"-- to cast off their thick winter hair. This process among the Dolgan reindeer begins on the holiday called "Pokrov" (July 12), and the normal, not emaciated, reindeer have not one wisp of winter hair left on them by August. The new hair is short, and with the coming of winter it grows gradually longer and longer. The more southern Tungus reindeer finish shedding earlier: they start dropping wisps of winter hair "by Onufrius' Day" (June 25), and are finally rid of it all by "Ivanov's Day" (August 1). On the other hand, the Tavgi reindeer shed later. Thus we see that the farther north a reindeer lives the later it sheds.

The hoofs on some reindeer grow out and bend upward so that it is necessary to cut them off. On the lower part of the back legs there is a gland which secretes a special liquid for lubrication. At each step the reindeer takes his hoofs give out a crack like the discharge of an electric spark. The distinguishing characteristic of a

233 reindeer is his tall branching horns. Forked horns appear on calves already by the end of the first year, and they develop completely during the second year. The horns drop off every year in the spring and grow out again by autumn. The horns of male reindeer fall off during the last days of October, after the driving season. The horns of castrated males and of cows without calves fall off in March or April; those of cows with calves fall off on the fifth day after they have calved; the horns of emaciated or sick reindeer fall off in August, or else they remain on throughout the course of a whole year covered with skin. The natives saw off the horns of such reindeer right at the base in the springtime, since they say that everything the reindeer eats "goes to the horns" and that it does not get fat for this reason. On emaciated reindeer the horns are usually flaccid (emek) and soft; the horns of fat reindeer are firm, tall, and
232 branchy, especially those of males. Commencing in May--on
233 "George's Day" (May 6)--the Dolgan reindeer begin to grow new
262 horns. At first they are soft, and covered with a delicate, hairy skin; by July they grow firm (ossify). Up until this time the delicate radicles of the horns (tuora) often break off, and when this happens the natives tie off the horn at a place below the break with a string so that there will not be any hemorrhage, and so that rain water will not fall on that place and make the brain of the reindeer "rot"; they place moss on the wound or pour salt on it. The horns of calves are especially weak, and if they are not handled carefully enough the top of the skull (eelde) is sometimes torn off along with the horns. The short radicles of the summer horns before they ossify are considered a delicacy; the natives cut them off with a knife from the horns of living reindeer and eat the thin skin raw, singeing off the hair beforehand.

233 [203] In the autumn before the first snow the castrated bucks, the cows--starting on the "Day of Assumption [of the Holy Mother of God]" (August 28)--and the bulls begin to rub off the thin skin of their horns against trees and stones; this is accompanied by a considerable amount of bleeding, and the scraps of skin dangling from the horns produce a very unpleasant impression. The process of rubbing the skin off their horns by bucks is connected with their castration. If they are castrated before they start cleaning their horns, these reindeer simply do not "clean themselves" that year, and they shed their horns later.

233 Among the Dolgan every reindeer has a particular designation de-
552 pending on how old it is. A newborn calf is called sah'l tugut, and

233 a grown calf is called simply tugut. The bucks have the following
552 designations, determined by their age: 1) yearling--m'uojkaa; 2) two-year-old--abalakaan; 3) three-year-old--ikteene; 4) four-year-old--njsmarkana; 5) five-year-old--amarkana; 6) seven-year-old--buur or myyceer. Bucks which are more than seven years old are called sippit taba (mature reindeer). The names for the mares are as follows: 1) yearling--muojkaa; 2) two-year-old--taragaj. Three-year-old mares are called biirde tərəəbyt--'having calved once'; four-year-old mares are called ikkite tərəəbyt--'having calved twice'; five-year-old--yste tərəəbyt--'having calved three times,' and so forth.

The more outstanding reindeer of the herd are given nicknames, which for the most part are the names of the persons from whom they were obtained, or else they are given diminutive appellations based on the color of their hair or on their sex. For example, soçyre is a reindeer with a dappled nose, and the nickname from this is "səçyremii"--reindeer with a cute dappled nose; or, cəəlkee means 'white,' and "cəəlkəəkəən" means 'cute white one'; or, at''r means 'buck,' and "at''r'mii" means 'little buck! An example of a person's name applied to a reindeer is "Montuo" in the expression "Catch Montuo!" "Montuo" is the name of a person living in Noril'sk.

233 Male reindeer become sexually mature at the age of two years and retain their potency until they are quite old. Usually there is one stud reindeer for twenty to twenty-five mares. The mares normally begin to calve in their second year, but it sometimes happens that a mere yearling will give birth to a calf. Such a mare they call eŋnii, and they do not let it out of their possession, but keep it with them, saying that it will be a reindeer which will give fine offspring (urdustaak taba). Dry mares are called dulaŋ', and barren ones baaŋaaj.

The Dolgan bucks begin to "be in heat" between the "Pokrov" Day (October 14) and Demetrius' Day (November 8); the Tungus reindeer start earlier, the wild reindeer later--between Demetrius' Day and and Michael's Day (November 21). During this period the stud bucks, who are "in heat," eat almost nothing, get extremely emaciated, and are chasing after mares the whole time. They become irritable, chase the uncastrated young males out of the herd, and sometimes rush at a person and butt him to death. Their snorting is heard day and night. It is interesting to note that, according to the Dolgan, the bucks which are "in heat" do not pursue bucks which have not

233 attained sexual maturity. During the time when they are "in heat" both the sires and the mares do all they can to avoid being harnessed, or allow themselves to be harnessed only for a short distance. When the rutting period passes, the horns of the males who were "in heat" fall off, and they begin quickly to get fat again.

The gestation period of the mares lasts eight months; calving begins at the end of April and continues until the appearance of the gnats. For this period each owner divides his herd into two parts: one part consists of bucks, and the other of mares. This is done because the bucks run much faster than the cows with calf and may exhaust the latter, and especially the calves which have just been born and are still weak. Along with the bucks are sent the reindeer dogs, which may tear the calves to pieces. The herd is reunited at the end of approximately one month, when the calves have already
[343] grown up and are able to follow after the bucks. If the reindeer are in the tundra at the time of calving, the herd of mares is driven to the woods, where they pick out places which are sheltered from the wind; in order to prevent the calves from being frozen, sheds--called daldaakaan--are sometimes built; these are in the shape of a semicircular shed made out of poles which are erected upright and covered on the leeward side with old pieces of "nyuk."(1)

1. A nyuk is a chamois-leather covering of a choom.

[204] Cold and late springs have a destructive effect on the reindeer litters; sometimes all the calves perish from the cold.

A calf requires close looking after only for the first two or three days--after this time he willingly follows his mother. There are cases where some mares calve in the autumn. In these cases their litter is doomed to death for sure, since the calves do not have time to get properly strong and they freeze to death, being unable to survive the severe cold. The mare which calves late is called orootii. Many of the offspring die as a result of physiological abnormalities; so, often the offspring is retained in the mother's womb, "tangled up in the guts," as the Dolgan put it; there also occur miscarriages, which are had for the most part by emaciated mares. In her whole lifetime a mare will bring forth up to twelve calves.

232 Reindeer are subject to many ailments. The most destructive are
233 anthrax--ulakan olyy--and hoof cancer. In order to prevent anthrax the natives fumigate the reindeer with a bumblebee nest, with "amber" (fossilized resin), with juniper, or with a splinter of wood from a tree

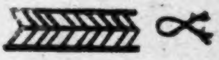
232 which has been shattered by lightening. In cases of hoof cancer
233 the reindeer sometimes begin to limp even before the appearance of the ulcers, and the latter appear only after some time has passed, and start to secrete pus. Hoof cancer is considered incurable and contagious. For this reason the natives avoid in their summer nomadic wanderings the places where many reindeer fell as a result of this disease.

The pulmonary (purulent) disease taba t'ŋata iriŋe buolara is also considered incurable, and no medicinal means are employed against it. Reindeer have the following stomach ailments;

"Peeŋee"-the reindeer vomits the contents of his stomach; it is considered incurable and results in death.

"As barbat" (the food does not pass)--constipation; it is cured by giving the reindeer melted burbot livers in their drinking water.

"s'ptar' jar"--indigestion of the stomach; they cure the reindeer by tracing with red ocher one line along the backbone, two along the sides, and two along the lower edges of the belly, or tracing one line along the backbone, and two along the sides and connecting them with crosslines:



In some places they burn through the hair with hot birchbark. Unfortunately, the meaning of the first method of treating the disease has been forgotten, and at the present time no explanation has been found.

"Taala katar"--"the spleen dries out"--the reindeer gets thinner and thinner until he falls down; they cure it by piercing the spleen with a needle in seven places, in order to produce swelling by causing the blood to rush in.

"Moojno katar"--"the neck dries out"--in this sickness the reindeer does not hold his head up; they cure it by cauterizing the neck with tinder. To do this they take a small piece of tinder, lay it on the neck of the animal and light it. This cure is founded on the belief that fire draws out disease.

"Taba mejiite ergijer"--"the head spins"--they cure this by shooting a gun which has been loaded with powder alone, singeing the hair of the animal.

In cases where the eye is diseased, the natives pour on it a pinch of snuff, or put seven live lice into the eye of the reindeer.

"Caataam"--a disease of the joints; watery swellings form on the cartilages of the knees; they cure this disease by making an elderly widow bite the sore joints, who says as she does this; "Let

232 the swelling fall off of you like the teeth in my mouth" (Ehigi
233 ispikkit min tiihim kurduk tystyn!).

"Tataar buolar"--the itch, mange; they cure this by smearing the ulcers with resin, or by washing them thoroughly with a decoction of alder bark.

In cases where reindeer break their bones the natives give them water containing copper filings, and then place their hands first on the mouth of the reindeer and then on the place where the break is, thinking that the copper will go there and act as a binding agent, like solder.

136 It must be mentioned that almost all the illnesses of the reindeer
232 occur in the summer. Not a few of the diseases are brought to the
233 reindeer by the mosquitoes and the gadflies, which are [205] a real scourge. The mosquitoes in the lower parts of the tundra surround the reindeer in clouds and suck their blood; they exhaust the reindeer and even worry them to death.

The reindeer gadflies--irgekte--are of two types: those which hang around the reindeer's hide in general and those which hang around the noses of the reindeer. The gadflies of the former type (Oedemagena taranti) appear in July, prick a little hole under the skin of the reindeer, and lay their eggs there. Larvae develop from these eggs, and they live under the reindeer's skin until May of the following year, at which time they drop out onto the moss and turn into gadflies. The hide of a reindeer which has been pierced by a gadfly in this fashion is usually covered with many swellings in the form of small lumps about as big as a nut, and the whole hide looks like a sieve and is no good for clothing. In the spring the Dolgan squeeze the larvae out of the lumps on those reindeer which have been hard hit by the gadflies, but it goes without saying that where there is a large number of reindeer so affected this method of treatment is not very useful. At the time when the larvae are coming out some of the reindeer are completely covered with sores and die from them. The gadflies of the latter type (Cephe homgiatropme) lay their eggs in the nasal cavities of the reindeer; from here the larvae penetrate into the throat of the reindeer, where they pass the winter; in the spring great numbers of them are thrown out when the reindeer coughs, which he does as a result of the irritation in his throat. The only effective method of dealing with the mosquitoes and the gadflies is to move the herds to a colder, more northerly region, where the climatic conditions prevent the insects from living.

54: Popov--29 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

[187]

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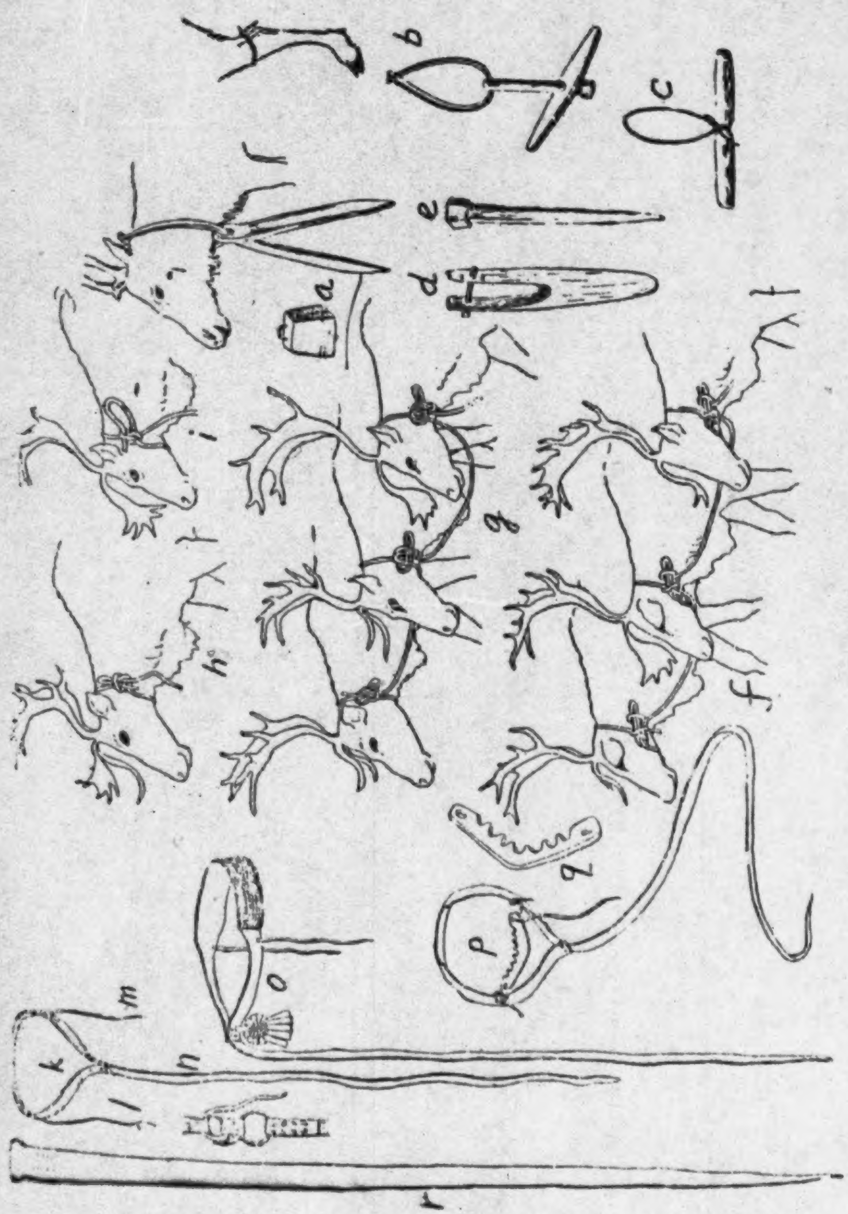
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Fig. 2

54: Popov--30 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

Figure 2 [187]

233 a, b, c -- bell fastened to the neck of a reindeer, and wooden
284 hobbles; upper right -- hind leg of a reindeer,
492 tied with a cord

d -- Reindeer leg hobble

e -- stick to which reindeer are tied

f -- quickly loosening knot

g -- knot for leading reindeer by a bridle

h -- male knot

i -- female knot

k -- halter for a male riding reindeer

l, m -- knots of the halter

o -- halter of a female riding reindeer

p -- halter with a small bone comb

q -- small bone comb

r -- reindeer saddle girth; at the side is shown the method of fastening the girth.

54: Popov--31 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

[189]

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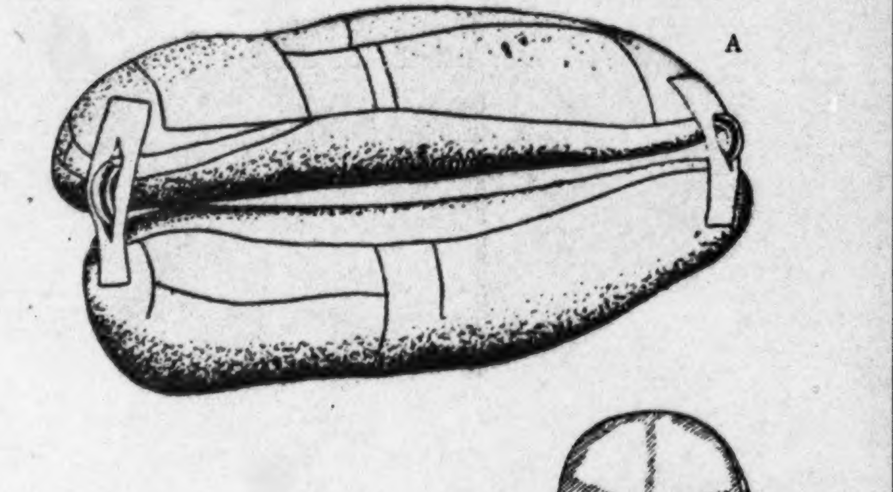

Fig. 3

A -- male reindeer saddle
B -- female or pack reindeer saddle
h -- pommel, painted with ochre and decorated with tin encrustations
r -- glass beads sewn on a brightly-colored cloth

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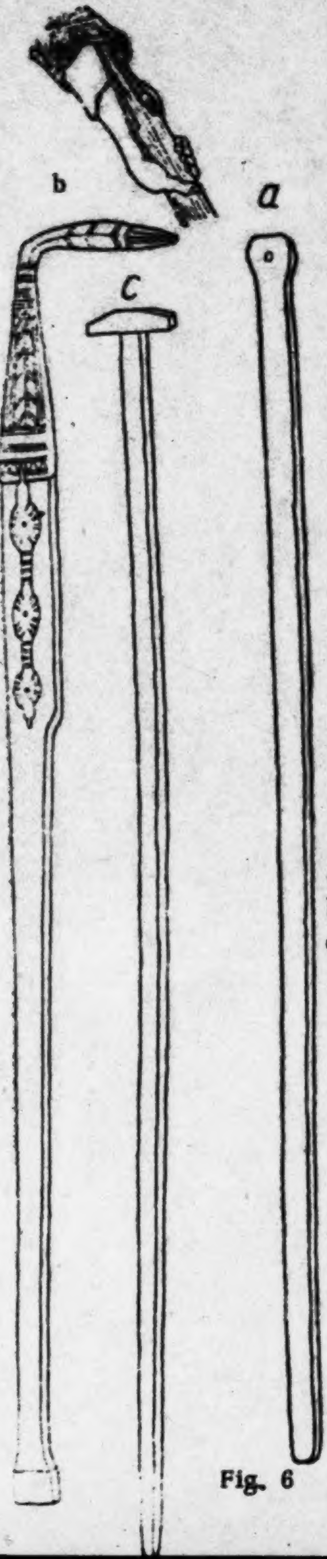

a--male
b--female with an iron top
c--old person's staff

Fig. 6

54: Popov--33 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[191]

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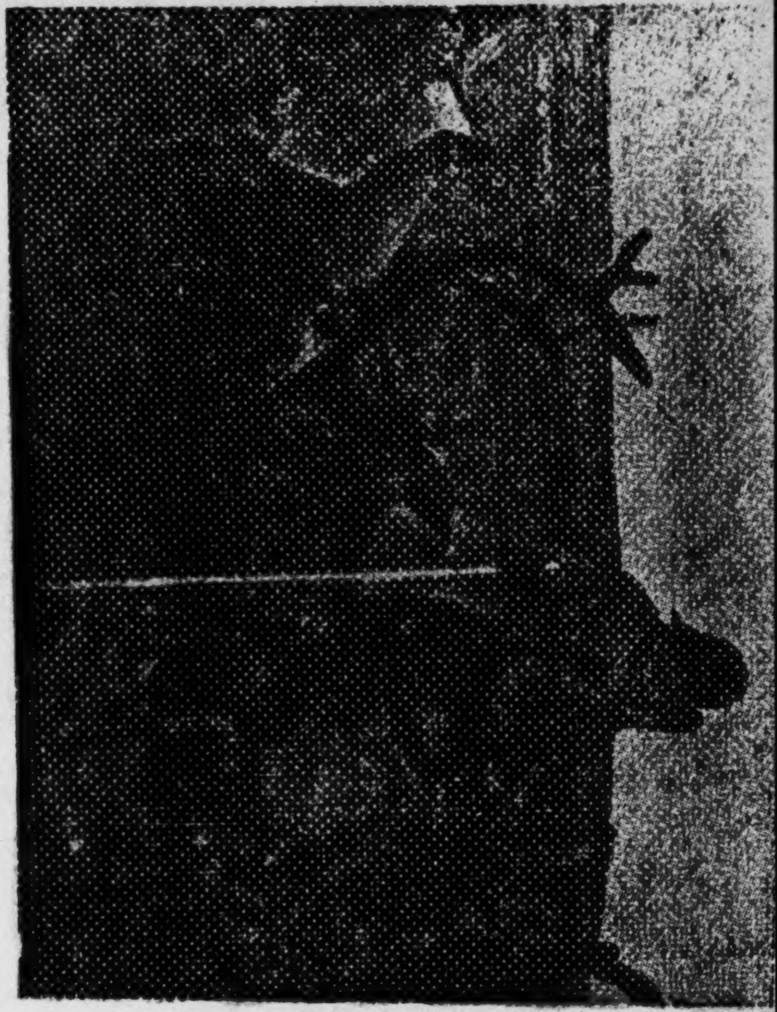

Fig. 7
Man riding a reindeer

54: Popov--34 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

[192]

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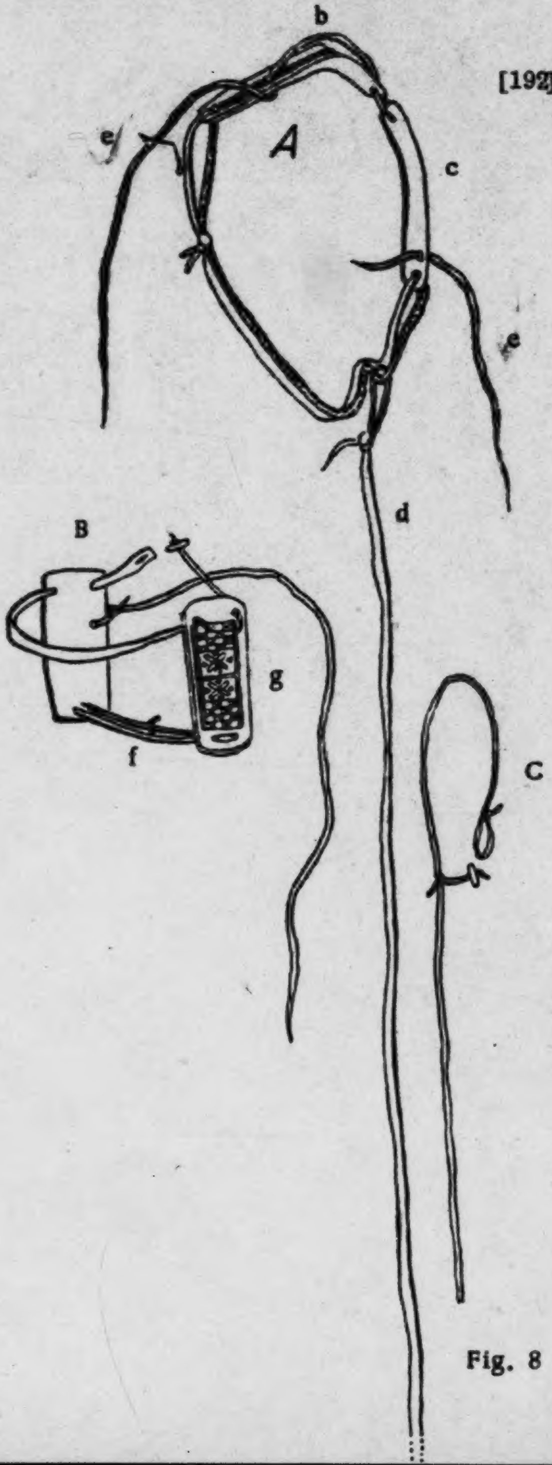
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C

Fig. 8

54: Popov--35 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

233 Figure 8 [192]
492

A -- halter of a lead reindeer in a team which pulls a sled

- b -- cheek bone
- c -- rein bone
- d -- reins
- e -- thongs

B -- halter for an outrunner reindeer

- f -- thongs connecting the plates
- g -- cheekbone plates

C -- Neckcord for a reindeer in a pack harness

54: Popov--36 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

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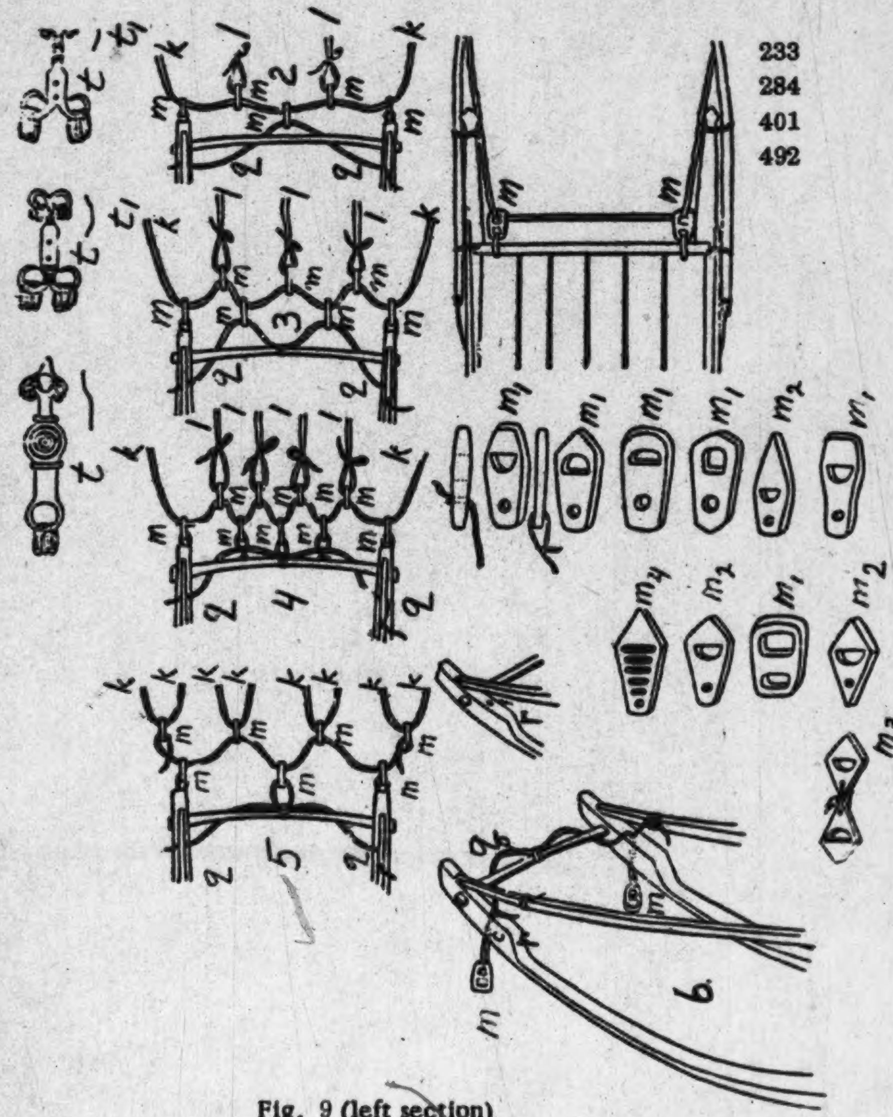
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Fig. 9 (left section)

54: Popov--37 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

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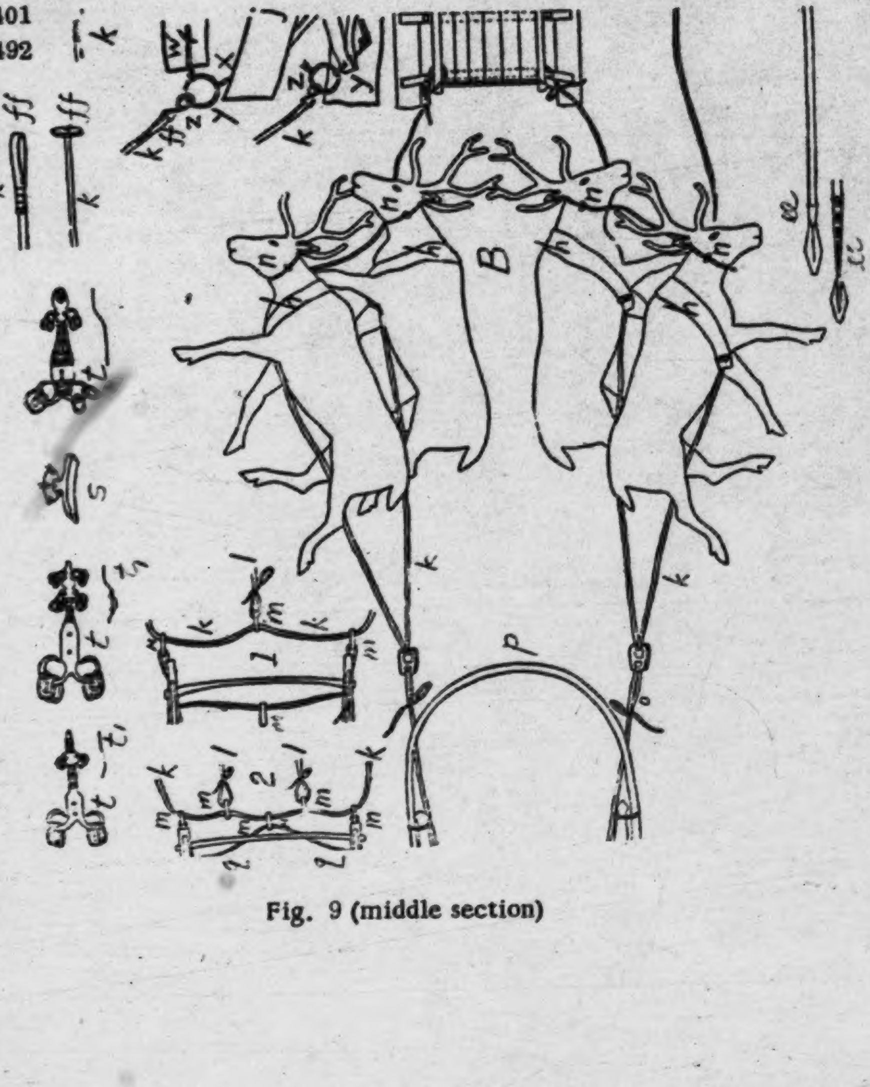

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Fig. 9 (middle section)

54: Popov--38 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

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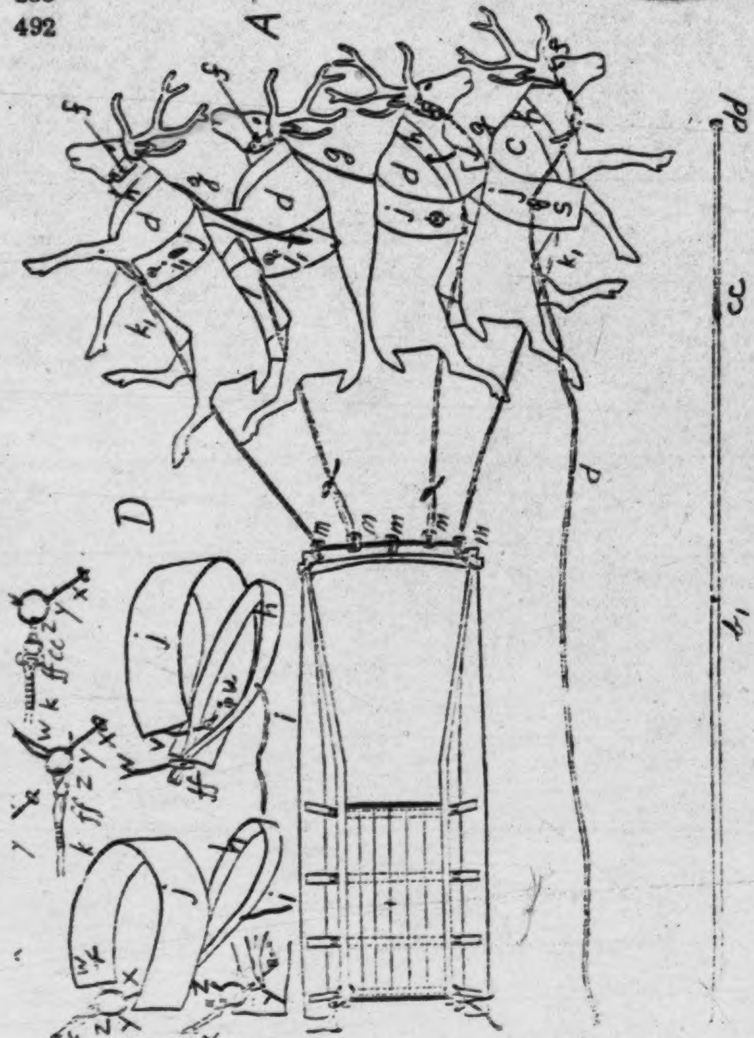
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Fig. 9 (right section)

54: Popov--39 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

Figure 19

233
284
401 A -- light harness
492 c -- lead reindeer
d -- outrunner reindeer
f -- halter on the lead reindeer
f -- halter on the outrunner reindeer
g -- thongs connecting the reindeer
h -- ala-straps
i -- thongs holding the ala-straps in place
i_1-- loops to which are tied the thongs which connect the reindeer
j -- girth
k -- main rein
l -- outrunner reins
m -- pulleys for the reins
m_1-- cargo pulley
m_2-- pulleys for light sleds
m_3-- fastening together of two pulleys in the absence of one pulley with two broad openings
m_4-- pulley with emergency openings in case of breakage
n -- neckcord for a cargo reindeer
o -- rein for a cargo sled
p -- rose-willow arch
q -- straps to which are tied the side pulleys and the supplementary pulleys of the light sled
c-- reins
b_1-- "Khorey" (h--small bone circle; aa--strap headband; ee--iron spear)
r -- openings in the ends of the runners for the straps of the side pulleys and the supplementary pulleys.
s -- bone hook for supporting the rein
t -- metal hooks for supporting the reins
t_1-- side view of the hooks
B -- Cargo harness
D -- Detail of the Yurak harness
u -- loop to which is attached the cord from the girth

54: Popov--40 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

233 v -- cord running from the girth
284 ff -- end of the rein with a wooden buckle, and with a loop instead of a buckle
401
492

Detail of the Dolgan harness

bb, z, cc -- iron hooks and buckles through which is passed the end of the rein
y -- iron ring
w -- thongs by means of which the iron ring is fastened to the girth

Ways of arranging the pulleys

1 -- with three reindeer
2 -- with four reindeer
3 -- with five reindeer
4 -- with six reindeer
5 -- with eight reindeer
6 -- front end of a light sled with side pulleys

54: Popov--41 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut

Dolgan

[193]

233

493

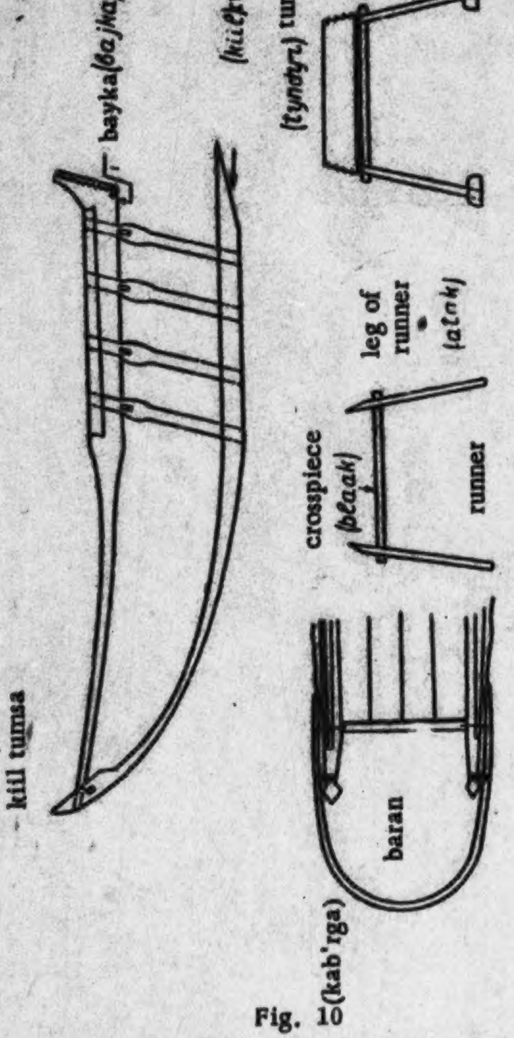

kiil tumsa
bayka(bajka)
(kiil)runner
(tyndyr) tundra
crosspiece
(blaak)
runner
leg of runner
(atak)
baran
(kab'rga)

Fig. 10
Names of the parts of reindeer sleds

54: Popov--42 E-3 (no date) 1835 Yakut Dolgan

233
493
531

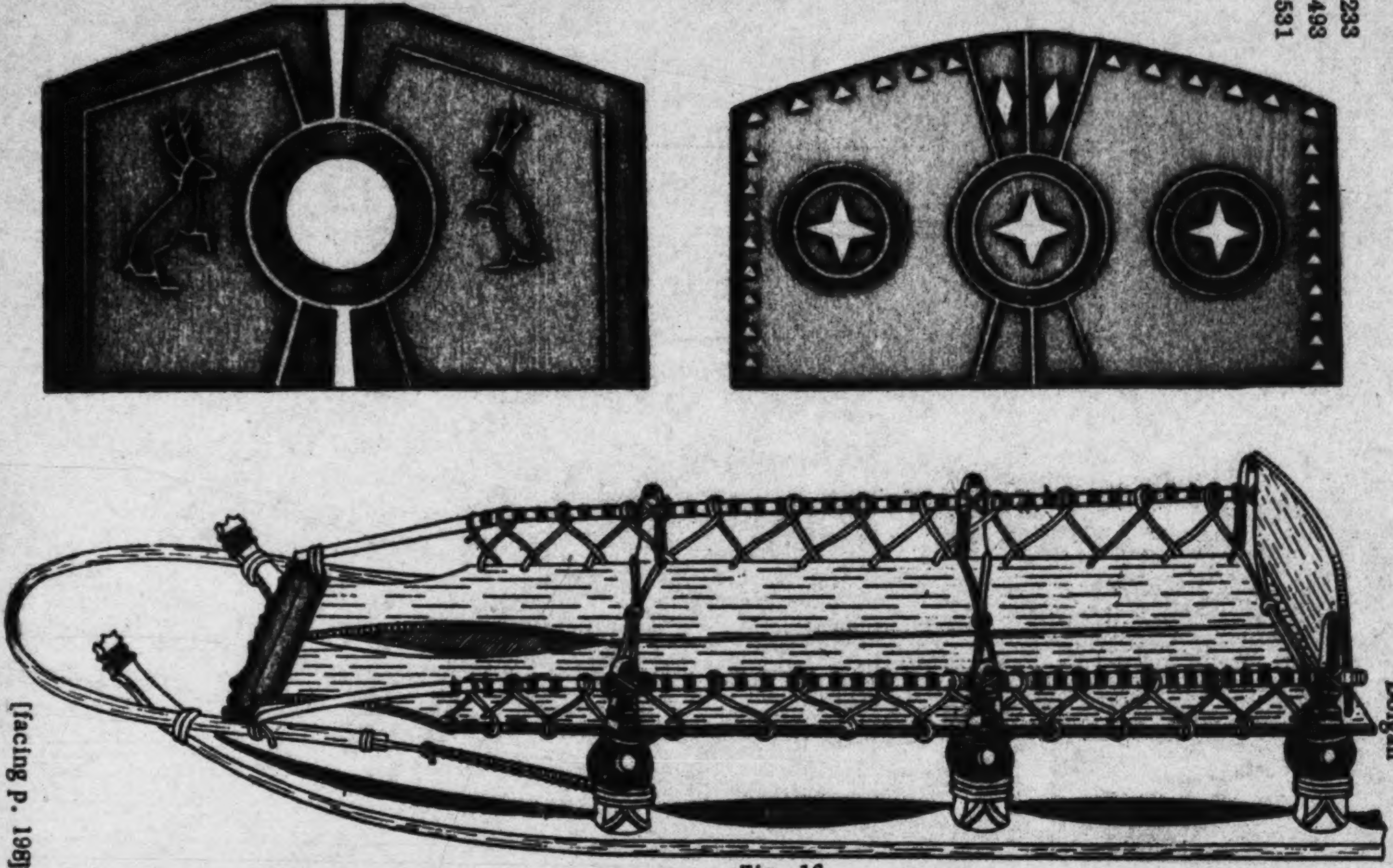
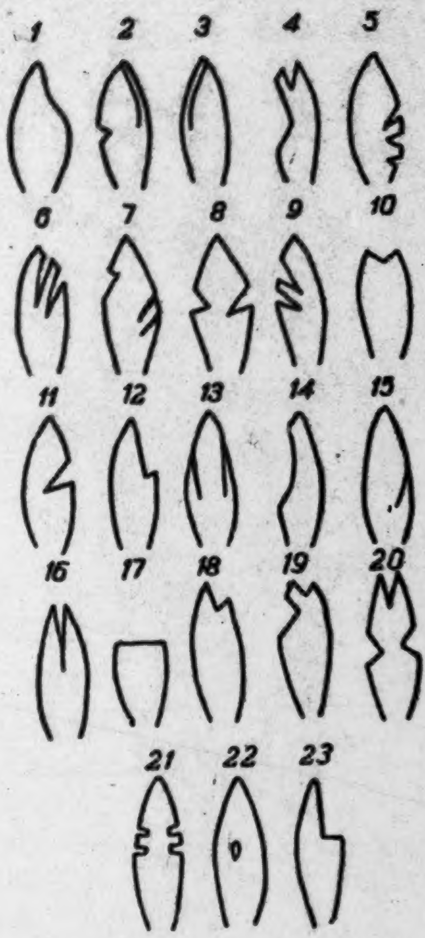


Fig. 16

Light sled "turkucaank." Above -- decorated backs of sleds

[facing P. 198]


1
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23

Fig. 17
Marks in the ears of reindeer

Figure 17

233 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19 -- Ojo b'h'' -- place which is cut out

4 -- Kennitten ojo b'h'' -- cut from the back side

5, 7, 9 -- Kerdii -- notches

6, 13 -- T''r'' -- slash

8, 20 -- Kiries -- cross

10 -- Yrdytten b'h'' -- cutout on top

15 -- K'r''t'nan t''p'' -- notch on the edge

16 -- Ortotunan t''r'' -- slash in the middle

17 -- Ebis ekci b'h'' -- straight cutoff

21 -- Ikki diegitten kerdii kiries -- notched cross on both sides

22 -- Kajagas im -- hole mark

23 -- Holtori b'h'' -- crooked notch (applied only to a reindeer which has a dappled face)

54c Popov--45 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan [201]

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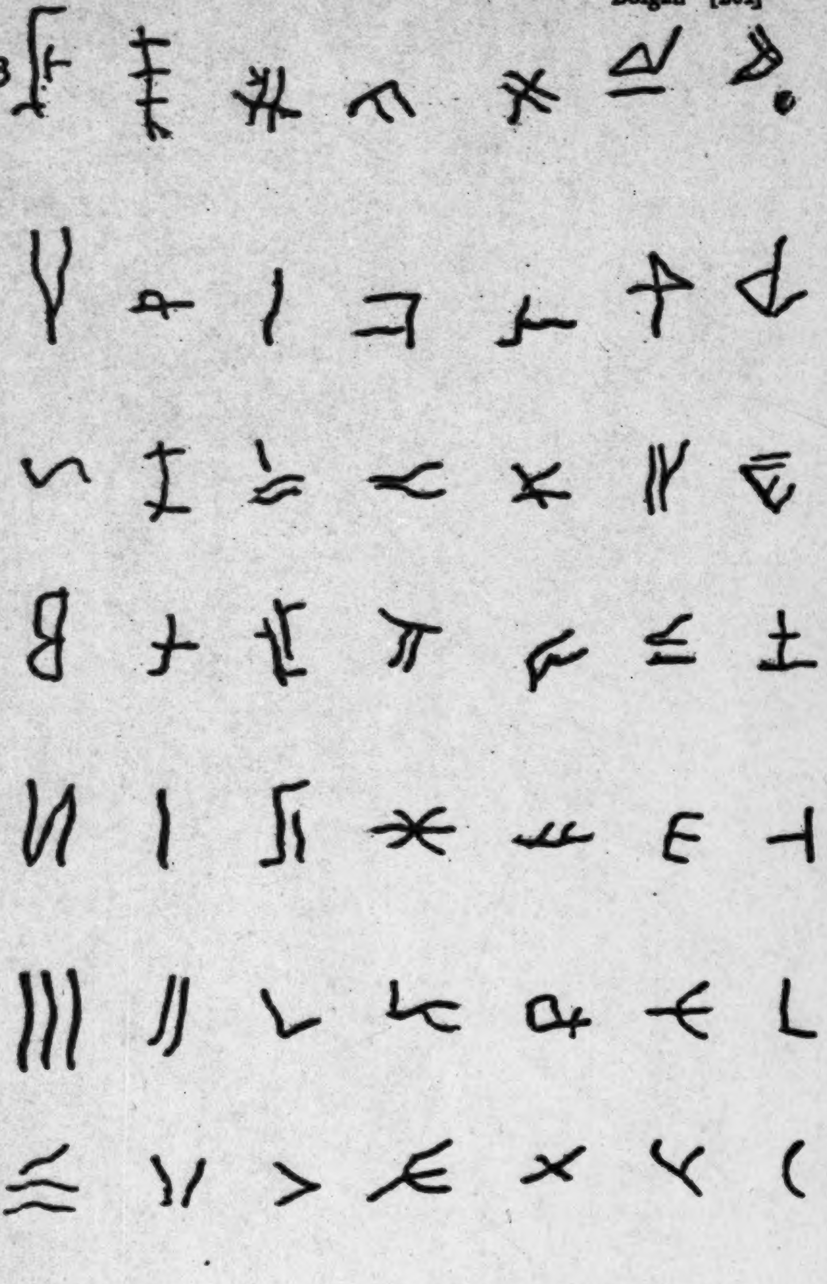

Fig. 18
Winter markings on the sides of reindeer